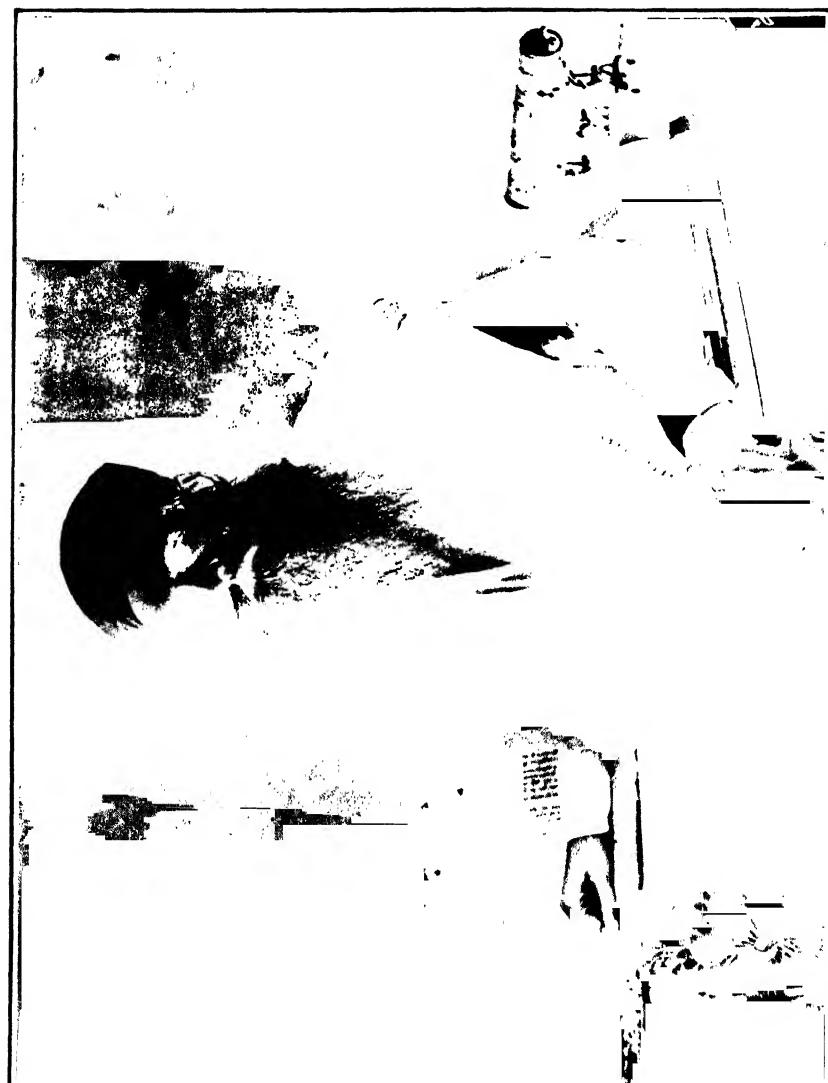


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IRANIAN STUDIES

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IRANIAN STUDIES

BY

CURSETJI ERACHJI PAVRY

LATE PRINCIPAL OF THE NASARVANJI RATANJI TATA ZEND PAHLAVI MADRESSA

BOMBAY

Captain Printing Works

1927

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Published September, 1927.

Printed by Mr. Rustomji Dossabhoy Shroff, at the
Jamsetjee Nesserwanjee Petit Parsi Orphanage
Captain Printing Works, Lal-Baug, Parel, Bombay,
and
Published by Dastur Cursetji Erachji Pavry
Connaught Mansions, Colaba, Bombay.

TO
THE SCHOLARS OF THE WEST
PATIENT AND TIRELESS STUDENTS
OF THE LORE AND LEARNING
OF ANCIENT, MEDIÆVAL AND MODERN IRAN
AS A MARK OF REGARD

PREFACE

Since the year 1859, when that worthy pioneer of Zoroastrian studies in India, Mr. K. R. Cama, set out upon a pilgrimage to the principal cities of Europe to meet, and obtain enlightenment from, the leading authorities on Iranian languages and literature, great strides forward have been made in India in the realm of Zoroastrian research. The critical method of Western Scholarship that he acquired, and the inspiration and enlightenment that he received, as a pupil of Professors Spiegel and Charle, and of Professors Oppert and Mohl, were transmitted with great liberality and utmost generosity to his devoted disciple Ervad Sheriarji D. Bharucha and other students. Parsi scholarship was in a deplorable state when the West came to its succour with its scientific method of critical research. A man of conscious independence and frankness of thought and speech, Mr. K. R. Cama became the apostle of a new era of critical study in the field of Zoroastrian researches.

The Parsis owe a deep debt of gratitude to the scholars of the West for their whole-hearted devotion to Iranian studies and Zoroastrian researches. It is, therefore, a matter of greatest satisfaction to me to dedicate this work to the scholars of the West, both past and present, as a mark of regard.

This volume is the outcome of an earnest wish, expressed again and again by my distinguished colleagues in Europe and America and my numerous Parsi friends, that some of my Gujarati writings be made available to a much larger and interested public in English.

Before closing these prefatory remarks, I desire to express the debt of thanks I owe to friends. I wish to thank Mr. G. K. Nariman, Joint Honorary Secretary of the K. R. Cama Oriental Institute, for his kindness in writing an Introduction for the book. I also wish to express my obligations to Professor P. A. Wadya, Dean of the Faculty of Arts and a member of the Syndicate of the University of Bombay, who kindly volunteered to translate the first ten chapters of the book and to go over the proofsheets of the first 167 pages as they came from the press, and to Mr. D. M. Madan, M.A., LL.B., sometime Honorary Secretary of the Gatha Society, for his kindness in volunteering to render into English the last chapter of the book.

CURSETJI ERACHJI PAVRY.

COLABA, BOMBAY,
SEPTEMBER 14, 1927.

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INTRODUCTION.

The Parsi community is justly noted for its practical manifestation of fellow-feeling. It is now a platitude that it stands preeminent in the East as the community most disposed to philanthropy. The huge sums which are yearly devoted to purely benevolent purposes are the envy and the admiration of many a minor sister race in India. Among these outlays are included patronage to religious knowledge, owned by individuals insufficiently provided with material or "creature" comforts. The influential Parsi press is chiefly Gujarati and, though narrow in its outlook, values devotion to religious studies even of the kind fostered by the fearless Mr. N. D. Khandalawala of uncompromising and advanced predilections. To my mind, however, one of those elder religious investigators, whose profound Avesta researches have not been adequately prized, is the author of this book.

Dasturji Cursetji Pavry, though advanced in age, occupies a position midway between the purblind orthodox and the extreme wing of radical reformers among the Parsis. His life is unique in some respects. Born in 1859 in Navsari he has maintained remarkably independent views for an ordained Zoroastrian priest. He was initiated at the age of twelve and officiated as priest performing the long-drawn out *nirangdin* and being spiritually responsible for at least one *dokhma*. He is one of the surviving pupils of the late Shahriyarji Bharucha, under whom he acquired the sacred languages —Avesta, Pañlavi and Persian. At the age of thirty he was appointed Principal of the Tata Zend School at Navsari. Henceforward he commenced his contributions to the press and issued works on religious themes, delivering sermons in Navsari and Bombay. These were collected in book-form and constitute a most substantial contribution to the religious literature of Parsis. The Dasturji's

articles in the *Journal of the Iranian Association* struck me as more than worthy of translation into English. As a rule I do not use Gujarati as a medium of expression. Those whose education does not extend into English are rarely responsive to the liberal canon of modern research and criticism. Dasturji Pavry appeared to me to be an eminent exception. I hinted therefore, that some enlightened Parsi should approach him and have his works placed before a wider range of readers in the English language. It is a great pleasure and personal satisfaction to me to see that my young friend Dr. Jal Pavry, M. A., Ph. D., has acted up to my suggestion with filial duty, doubtless under circumstances sorely taxing his patience.

The orthodox among the Parsis have faith, divorced from reason, in the immaculate and inviolate correctness of the traditional text of the Avesta. They adore the letter, whatever their attitude towards the prime inspiration which underlies the written syllable. That they are in the wrong is beyond question.

The editors of the Avesta from Westergaard to Spiegel and Geldner have all remarked upon the perfunctory habits of the copyists of the MSS. The example on example so dispassionately piled is not calculated to inspire confidence in the transmitted text. Its corruption renders it suspect by itself without taking into consideration the history of the Avesta redaction, the several philological and orthographical phases through which it has passed. One of the Bombay University MSS of the Vandidad begins with folio 19. The first 18 leaves are wanting except two, which are bound in after folio 373. Folios 230 and 232 are wanting; while 231 is bound as the last leaf. The Yasna MS. of the same Library is very carelessly written. It is worthless. Another Vandidad Sada MS. is better written in the beginning but quite carelessly transcribed later on. The Cambridge Yasna Sada breaks off at folio 192 in the midst of

Yasna 50. The Ms. of Yasna with a Sanskrit translation in the library of the late Jamspaji Minocherji Jamsp Asana has several portions wanting in Avesta and Sanskrit, and of which three pages are left blank. In the Yasna Sada Ms. the first three leaves and also the last leaf are missing. In another Ms. the last leaves are quite destroyed. The Khorda Avesta and Yasht codex is very inexact; another Khorda Avesta is very careless. In the Copenhagen University Library the Ms. of Vendidad with Pahlavi translation has the folios entirely wanting. In the same Library another Ms. of the Vendidad breaks off in the middle of a page and is therefore a copy that is begun but not finished.

According to the kolophon of the Farvardin Yasht written in Iran in 1721, the Parsis in India about a thousand years after their migration were no longer in possession of the genuine *hom* plant nor of the Farvardin Yasht. Jamasp surnamed Vilayati prepared a copy for his Indian co-religionists at the request of Mobed Rustomji of Surat. The Vendidad of the Sassanians was certainly accompanied by a Pahlavi translation and, due to neglect and ignorance, numerous Avesta glosses of the Pahlavi translation have crept into the Avesta text of the Vendidad Sada. In separating the Avesta text from its Pahlavi setting, the compilers of the Vendidad Sada sometimes stumbled badly. Our Pahlavi Vendidad often leaves us in the dark as to the extent of abridgement, for the authors often forget to give the catchword after the sign of abbreviation. Neriyo-sangh, who translated a portion of Parsi scriptures into Sanskrit, has left his grand task inadequately performed. His translation of the Yasna reaches down only to chapter 47. At that point a much less skilful hand undertakes the continuation. This lesser personage is believed to be a relative of Neriyo-sangh. It is significant that all Sanskrit translations of the Yasna have a peculiar hiatus, which probably existed in the archetype itself, on which the learned Mobed was working. How very remarkable it is that, while copies of MSS. made in

Iran display care, the Indian type furnishes a strange commentary on our popular belief ! While the Parsis of India, admittedly a fully tolerated community, prove sloven scribes and negligent custodians of the holy writ, the Persian Zoroastrians, presumed to be groaning under unspeakable tyranny in their own homes, proved superior preservers of written tradition and always faithful and conscientious transcribers.

Unlike their Brahmanic brethren, the Parsi priests did not have a memorised text of their great Yashts besides their written text, upon which they could draw for needed restoration. Again and again Geldner calls attention to the superiority of the copies made in Persia. Sometimes it is difficult to distinguish the gloss from the original text. The great task of our European and American savants has been as far as possible to free the Avesta text from these embarrassing accretions. There is no doubt that the final redaction of the Avesta text took place in part at least a considerable time after the last Yezdegerd. And although the copyists knew many of the texts by heart, the oral text had become more corrupt than the written and kept constantly clashing with the latter. As regards orthography the MSS. present a very motley appearance and Geldner has everywhere called in the aid of Persia MSS. to regulate the fixing of vowels.

In an honest and intrepid attempt to acknowledge the at times hopeless corruption of the texts and an erudite resolve to reconstruct the neglected originals, resides the outstanding merit of Dasturji Cursetji.

It is a great satisfaction to me that my suggestion has been taken up. The Dasturji will now be judged by some of the most renowned of his peers, whose admiration will be exacted by his masterful control of the changing ritual, his intimate familiarity with the ceremonial. The West, so far as it is not accessible to the amateur blandishments of Knights with protégés to defend,

will appreciate Dastur Cursetji's indomitable moral force which disdains to prevaricate over the delinquencies of his and my ancestors at the bar of Truth, refusing for the sake of earning the plaudits of the half-baked to reject, for example, the testimony of Anquetil du Perron who indicts the Parsi priest with offences of mangling and stealing texts and smuggling non-Parsis into the Fire temples.

The days of "My religion" right or wrong, have passed. The day of Truth-above-all has dawned. When history makes an inventory of the venerable devotees of veracity in my community, it will not assign the last place to the priest-scholar who, in my opinion, is the most competent to pronounce authoritatively on the genuineness of an Avesta text and to expound the original principles and the slow evolution of Zoroastrian ritual, claiming for him a niche alongside of K. R. Cama and Shahriyarji Bharucha in the annals of Zoroastrian research.

MAZGAON, BOMBAY,

G. K. NARIMAN.

September, 1927.

ERRATA

Page 2, line 7 : for Kobalya read Kolalya.
Page 3, line 13 : for Parthiaus read Parthians.
Page 3, line 31 : for oposotion read opposition.
Page 3, line 32 : for hsi read his.
Page 14, line 11 : for appellation read appellation.
Page 15, line 19 : for take read took.
Page 33, line 24 : for Neeshazar read Nooshazar.
Page 41, line 1 : for Behramgor Kobad read Behramgor, Kobad.
Page 45, line 15 : for lowing read flowing.
Page 46, line 22 : for injuction read injunction.
Page 47, line 7 : for arisesis read arises is.
Page 47, line 32 : for injuction read injunction.
Page 50, line 2 : for thatwherever read that wherever.
Page 50, line 24 : for thickly read thickly.
Page 50, line 26 : for invitefatal read invite fatal.
Page 61, line 4 : for has read have.
Page 65, line 32 : for comon read common.
Page 65, line 33 : for convering read covering.
Page 69, line 5 : for arius read Darius.
Page 78, line 21 : for vague read vogue.
Page 85, line 23 : for tones read stones.
Page 90, line 19 : for seated the rein read seated therein.
Page 94, line 16 : for thei read their.
Page 97, line 21 : for momments read movements.
Page 104, line 31 : for goLEN read golden.
Page 110, line 16 : for antities read entities.
Page 114, line 13 : for indicatiou read indication.
Page 119, line 19 : for Anya read Asnya.
Page 120, line 4 : for knowt hat read know that.
Page 122, line 20 : for weres pecifically read were specifically.

Page 162, line 13 : *for are read our.*
Page 162, line 13 : *for ne read no.*
Page 164, line 6 : *for lolossing read blossoming.*
Page 176, line 13 : *for drayers read prayers.*
Page 176, line 7 : *for summarises read summarises.*
Page 180, line 17 : *for conciously read conscicously.*
Page 180, line 17 : *for unconiously read unconsciously.*
Page 187, line 4 : *for ceremoney read ceremony.*
Page 199, line 2 : *for thate read that.*
Page 201, line 3 : *for ceremoney read ceremony.*
Page 215, line 31 : *for Ashwatnegha read Ashvamedha.*

IRANIAN STUDIES

THE EARLY ATASH-BEHRAMS OF IRAN—MONUMENTS OF PERSIAN GLORY.

The Atash-Behrams of ancient Persia are associated with Parsi history, and call back to our minds the glorious events of that history. Though they were thus religious monuments of historic events, with the lapse of time they lost their early significance and in later times were transformed into purely religious emblems. This change is very closely connected with the political decline of the Parsi Empire. The original kiblas of Atash-Behrams were not the outcome of a religious purpose alone. Religious aims were mixed in them with other practical purposes. The foundation of these structures was associated with the purpose of immortalising the glorious achievements of our ancestors. The people of those times were constantly reminded of their historical antecedents, and looked with reverence and affection to their ancestors. The monuments inspired amongst the Persians heroism, enthusiasm, and the desire to emulate their predecessors in the work of adding glory to the Persian name.

These Atash-Behrams are associated with the Sassanide rule, and Who founded these Atash-Behrams ? Ardashir Bābakan was the first founder of these Kiblas. We gather from the Pahlavi work “Kar-The Dates of their Foundations. nameh Ardashir Babakān” as well as from other Pahlavi works the following details :

Firstly, to commemorate his victory over Ardvān, the king of Parthia, Ardashir founded the city of Bukhte (Bakhte) Ardashir, and built therein ten Atash-Behrams.

Secondly, he also built ten Atash-Behrams in the city of Valash (Valkhash) Shapur, which he also founded.

Thirdly, after his victories over different countries when he returned to Pars he founded the city of Khurehe Ardashir, and built a number of Atash-Behrams therein.

Fourthly, according to an old manuscript Ardashir brought about a settlement in Kobalya, and established seven Atash-Behrams therein.

Fifthly, from the Arabic and Persian translations of the original Pahlavi document written by Ardashir's Grand Vazir Dastur Tansar it would appear that in the days of the "Muluke tavayaf," the governors of the provinces had set up a number of Atash-Khanas in their own districts contrary to the old practice. Ardashir had succeeded in consolidating the scattered territories of the Parsi Empire ruled over hitherto by independent governors; and to commemorate this work of consolidation the king built a number of royal Atash-Behrams.

Sixthly, the coins of the Sassanian period also furnish to us fresh evidence about the foundation of these Atash-Behrams by Ardashir. Some of these coins are of silver and some are of gold. They belong to the age of Ardashir and his immediate successors. They all bear on one side the impression of a fire.

It would thus appear that these Atash-Behrams date from the Sassanian period, and that the earliest founder was Ardashir Babakan. He had built them in commemoration of his victory over different countries. The descendants of Ardashir regarded these Kiblas with veneration. They continued the religious policy of Ardashir, extended the limits of the Empire, and added to the renown of the Zoroastrian Religion by founding Atash-Behrams in the conquered countries.

The Policy of Ardashir. His difficulties. It is necessary to give a short account of the political work of Ardashir in connection with the foundation of Atash-Behrams. Before he came to the throne the countries over which he ruled were not under the control of a single monarch, but were divided into a number

of provinces, each ruled over by an independent governor. These governors introduced amongst their subjects their own views about Religion and morality, and the Iranian peoples had, under these circumstances, lost sight of their original religion. Dastur Tansar's letter and other documents give us some idea of the degeneration that had come over the Iranian races. The Parsi community had been ruled over and enslaved during a period of 550 years by foreigners like the Greeks and Parthians. Under the Parthian rule they seem to have completely forgotten their ancient religious practices and views and had adopted a number of undesirable alien elements. Not only had they fallen away from their religion, and got depraved in their morals. They further appear to have lost as a nation their fine build and beauty of face. Devil-worship and a number of other vices had got hold of them, and they obstinately resisted the royal attempts at introducing reforms. Tansar tells us that when Ardashir endeavoured to save them from the pernicious consequences of the despotic rule to which they were accustomed, they opposed such attempts on the grounds that these laws were framed by their wise ancestors, and that these customs were old, and that it was undesirable to change them. They opposed every attempt on the part of the king to improve the condition of his people, and to rule with wisdom and justice. The king thus encountered greater difficulties in improving and educating his subjects than in recovering his ancestral dominions. We can well understand these difficulties if we recall to our minds the acute controversies of our own times on questions connected with religious and social customs. The opposition from the fanatics of his times made Ardashir all the more ardent in the work of reform. In

Tansar's words, "he accomplished the work of a thousand years in fourteen years." He brought together the different sects of his people in the different provinces, and made of them a single nation enjoying common rights and privileges. He freed the people from foreign yoke, maintained peace within his dominions, and converted the people into law-abiding citizens. Thus this true reformer conferred a permanent debt of obligation on his country and on his religion by his services. He began with driving away from the country with heavy loss the Parthian King Ardvan, reduced to subjection the governors of smaller provinces and other rebels and commemorated his work of conquest and consolidation by the building of Atash-Behrams.

The policy of Ardashir was to link up his throne with his religion. It appears that in the city of Shiz situated near the **Religion and Politics.** pass of Paikuli to the south of the Shirvan river, there was a famous Atash-Kadeh known as Azarakhsh. Every Sassanian King used to go to this Atash-Kadeh at the time of his accession to the throne as an act of homage. This practice was first introduced by King Ardashir. Situated as the Paikuli pass was, away from the capital, it was this official visit and act of homage alone that converted the secular monarch into a protector of the Religion, and made him a beloved of his subjects. This religious practice constituted an important element in the ceremony of the coronation of the king. After his coronation the king had to go to a specified Daremeher where he was surrounded by his Anjuman; and there with the fire burning before them the king and his subjects offered common prayers and invoked common blessings.

There is a custom amongst the Dasturs of Navsari that, when a Dastur dies, in the Uthamna ceremony that takes place on the third day the chief Desaiji in the presence of a gathering confers a shawl on the new Dastur on behalf of the Anjuman. Though this act of conferring a shawl on the Dastur announces him as a Dastur

The Daremeher at Navsari and its chief priest.

appointed by the Ahjuman, the confirmation is not yet complete, and is supplemented by another ceremony on the fourth day after the death of the Dastur. This final ceremony is performed in the chief Daremeher of Navsari. At the appointed time on the fourth day the Dastur proceeds to the chief Daremeher with a small following; the chief Desai is also present, and confers on behalf of those assembled a shawl on the Dastur. This ceremony is a public function intended to confer a formal recognition on the new Dastur, as the chief Dastur of the principal Daremeher. After this ceremony the Dastur enjoys all the privileges of a chief Dastur over all the Panthaks and religious institutions. This custom is evidently a survival of the earlier custom, which led the Sassanian emperors to proceed to the Daremehers for offering homage to fire, and to give a solemn undertaking to look after the religious interests of the people as a protector of Religion; nay—perhaps this custom is an exact reproduction of the earlier institution of enthroning the chief Mobeds in the Sassanian times. Perhaps there was some substantial cause which led to the preservation of this ancient custom in the Daremeher of Navsari alone throughout the whole of India. When the Parsis emigrated from Persia, a small colony proceeded towards the Punjab and Sindh. About 1090 A. D. the Parsis who left Sanjan settled in small numbers in Vankāner, Broach, Variav, Ankleswer, Khambat, and Navsari. Amongst those who settled in Navsari in 1142, Navsari was considered to be the chief seat of the Parsi priests, and on account of the importance attached to Navsari, its Daremeher was considered to be the chief Daremeher, and its priest the chief priest of the Parsis. Owing to this recognised position the son of a Mobed belonging to the Bhagar or some other Panth, who has undergone the ceremonies of Navar and Maratab, at the chief Daremeher of Navsari, is allowed to do work as a ceremonial priest in any Daremeher in any part of India. We can thus understand why this ancient custom was preserved at Navsari. It is difficult to say when and under what circumstances it was

first introduced, but we may safely conjecture that it could have only come into vogue after the establishment of the Daremeher at Navsari, and after its recognition as the chief Daremeher.

The Sassanian rule bears witness to a more glorious epoch in the past. Ardashir did as much for the development of the Religion as for the extension of the territories. He devoted himself whole heartedly to the removal of alien elements from the Religion, and thus of purifying it. He encouraged Science, and Art, and thus contributed to the enlightenment of his subjects. The foundation of Atash-Behrams was an emblem of the fact that all his political and social reforms were founded on Religion. It may be said that the foundation of these Atash-Behrams marks the commencement of the new era of reform under Ardashir. He appears to have had a threefold purpose in the founding of these Kiblas. Firstly, he had in view the idea of consolidating his empire under a single political and religious ruler. Secondly, he hoped to lead his subjects on to the straight paths of the true Religion and to make them godfearing. Thirdly, he aimed at removing the darkness of illiteracy and superstition by spreading amongst his people the light of Religion and Science. He erected the Atash-Behrams as public monuments bearing witness through the fire enthroned in them to the light of knowledge which removes all physical, moral, and spiritual darkness. Fire, as the emblem of asha, leads us on towards the safe and straight path of Righteousness. These early Atash-Behrams, moreover, reminded the people of the unity of the temporal and spiritual powers. They were witnesses to the glories of the past. Whilst immortalising the work of great men, they kept alive religious fervour, and were calculated to foster the qualities which make for Righteousness.

The fact that these early Atash Behrams were memorials of great victories is further confirmed by the name-

**The connection
between Atash and
Behram.**

regard to the origin of this name in the Avestan writings; for the name is connected with the language and historical events of the times in which the Atash-Behrams came into existence. We find in Pahlavi the words "Ātashe Vāhrām" written in a variety of manners, and from these have come the Persian "Atashe-Beherām." This compound word can be traced to Pahlavi, and we may safely assume that the kibla known as "Atashe-Beherām" must have originated in times when the Pahlavi language was in common use. And these times must be the times of the Parthian and Sassanian rulers.¹

I. After the destruction of the Achaemenian Empire the Parthians acquired power in Iran and it was under their rule that the Pahlavi language first came to be used. Pahlavi was only a new phase or development of the two earlier Iranian languages, Avesta and Cuneiform. I cannot help making a few observations with regard to the origin of Pahlavi especially as so many different opinions have been expressed by philologists in the East and in the West. Pahlavi is the name of an Iranian language, and seems to be derived from the districts of Parthia. The term "Parthia" we owe to the Greeks. No such name occurs in the Avesta, and it came to us under the early Achaemenians. The district known as Parthia was first acquired by Kurush, the founder of the Achaemenian dynasty. And after the overthrow of this dynasty the Parthians ruled over Iran for five centuries and a half, till Ardashir Babakan set himself on the throne of Persia after overthrowing that power.

Though we do not find the name "Parthia" in the Avesta, we find the term "Parthav" in the Cuneiform inscriptions. This "Parthav" has been transformed into "Pahlav," and with the addition of the suffix 'i' it has been changed into "Pahlavi," and this term means "a language derived from Parthia." The Parthians have not only influenced the origin of the term, but have also left their marks on the language itself. But though the language originated from the Parthians and though it contains a few Semitic elements, it is not a Parthian language. With the exception of its name and a few alien elements the language is Aryan (Iranian), and the Iranian languages have contributed largely to its literature. Moreover, we have several instances of languages whose names are derived from the names of cities or countries. I may mention a few amongst the reasons that have led me to this view with regard to the origin of this term "Pahlavi."

(1) In the Iranian group of languages we find a number of instances of words in which "th" has been changed into "h" and "r" into "l". In this instance more especially there has been a transposition of words. It is not necessary for us to discuss on this occasion the transformation which words undergo when they pass from one language to another.

(2) Some of the authors of the Persian Farangs refer to a place by the name of "Pahlav," and this Pahlav is only another form of the Cuneiform "Parthav" and refers to Parthia.

This language had come into use as common speech under the rule of the Sassanides. As we know, one of the causes that led to the foundation of kiblas was the desire to celebrate the great victories won by the Parsi Emperors over their enemies in defence of their

(3) According to Dr. Haug the Parthians call themselves, with some justification, a war like race. They had become rulers of Iran after having defeated the Greeks, and they could not have ruled over the country for five centuries and a half unless they had been a brave and war-like people. Dr. Haug also tells us that the Parthian Kings were known as "Pahlav." This may have been a special appellation of the King indicating their bravery and valour.

(4) In the days of the Parthians there was a famous family by the name of Surina, the members of which had received the appellation of "Pahlav." After the fall of the Parthians a descendant of this family dedicated his services to the Sassanian Empire and took a leading part in the war against the Roman Emperor Julian as commander of the army of Shapur Ahurmazd. This family of Pahlavs is thus a Parthian family known for their bravery.

(5) The poet Firdausi rightly regards Pahlavi as the language of the valiant, and this throws new light on the Persian word "Pahlavan," "Pahlavi" and "Pahlavan" are only two different forms of Cuneiform "Parthav." Thus the Persian "Pahlavan" appears to have been formed by the addition of "an" to Persian "Pahlav" derived from "Parthav." "Pahlavan" is an appellation originally given to the war-like Parthians, and subsequently it was transformed into a common name for any class of warlike people. Though originally applied to the warriors of Parthia it was subsequently used in the Shah-Nameh for warriors ancient or of more recent times, and we find him calling heroes like Kershap, Jal, Rustom, and their brave sons and descendants "Pahlavans."

(6) We find references in the Mahabharat and Ramayan to a people called Pahlav. This is perhaps evidence of an invasion of India by a people known as Pahlavs, after the Hindu Aryans had settled in the Punjab and the countries round about. These Pahlavs were the Parthians. The word Pahlav has been used not only for the district of Parthia, but also as an appellation of the Parthian monarchs, as a family name, for the language of the Pahlavans, and also for a warlike community.

(7) Though the Parthians were Semitics, they had come into close contact with the Iranians and the religion of the Magi, after their conquest of Iran. They had to a certain extent adopted that Religion. The Magi (the Mobeds) were the priests and religious guides of the Iranians as they had been the priests of other earlier races, and had exercised considerable influence over the Iranian language.

(8) Though Pahlavi is derived from two Iranian languages, it is not purely Iranian in its composition. This was due to its origin in the days of the Parthians who were Semitic in their speech, and it naturally received a number of Semitic words. It got its name Pahlavi from the ruling community of the Parthians though it was in itself an Aryan language. The Parthians appear to have made it to a certain extent their political language. Nevertheless, the language was yet in its infancy, though we find a number of coins and seals during the Parthian rule bearing Pahlavi characters. The Pahlavi language grew and developed under the Sassanides when we find translations and commentaries of the Avesta, prayers and a number of works on history and morals all composed in Pahlavi. A very large part of this Pahlavi literature was unfortunately lost under the Arab rule, though some of them before they disappeared were translated into Arabic. The development of Pahlavi literature was largely due to the Sassanian monarchs. The Zoroastrian Religion had lost much of its influence under

Religion. This practice was only a continuation of earlier customs known to their Kyanhian predecessors. Thus Kaikhusro had founded the fire Adar Gushasp in memory of his capture of the Fort of Deje Beheman. King Gushtasp established the fire Adar Burjin in memory of his first victory over his enemy Arjasp. According to the Bundahishn King Gushtasp had established a number of fires on the tops of mountains in honour of his religion. When the prophet founded the new religion, he is said to have removed from Khwarezm to Kabulastan the famous fire Adar Faroba created by Jamshid. Thus a number of fires seem to have been created as thanks-offerings, and Gushtasp had called some of his sons and grandsons by names derived from fire; and according to the Shah-nameh King Aspandiar established a hundred Atash-Kadehs in honour of his third and final victory over Arjasp.

The brave Peshutan according to the Beheman Yesht had with the help of the fires Adar Faroba, Adar Gushasp, and Adar Burjin, destroyed all idol-worship and devil-worship, and spread the new religion. It was in continuation of this early custom that Ardashir founded kiblas known as Atashe-Vâhrâm in memory of his great victories. Now the divinity that presides over victory is Beheram Yazad, and the Avestan Verethraghna, the Pahlavi Vâhrâm, and Persian Beherâm, all have "victorious" as one of their meanings. Thus there is no doubt that the words "Atashe-Vâhrâm" and "Atashe-Beherâm" arose in Sassanian times in connection with the fires that were founded in honour of victories by the association of the fire with the name of this presiding divinity, and the expression means "a fire that bestows victory" or "a fire in honour of

the Parthians, and no serious attempt had been made to save and revive it. The only Parthian monarch who had made a noteworthy attempt to bring together the scattered books and literature of the Zoroastrian Religion was Valkhash. But his descendants never concerned themselves about following his policy. Nay, some of the Parthian monarchs (of Muluke Tavâyaf) had destroyed Atash Kadehs, had burnt dead bodies in fire, and had publicly repudiated the Zoroastrian Religion.

victory." Though with the changes in time and circumstances we have no longer any new kiblas founded in honour of victories, the name "Atashe Beherām" has been preserved amongst us, and with it are preserved memories of its early history. These fires have a royal prestige associated with them, and a crown and a throne are dedicated to them as to a monarch. These fires we find described as brave warriors to whom bows and arrows, swords and shields and spears were offered as emblems of victory. In the Avesta the fire known as Atarsh Spenta is called a Rathaeshtār, and Atash Beherām is also known as a chief or a monarch.

Though in the earlier days it was regarded as an act of honour

The Enthronement of Fire and the Privileges associated with it. to found a fire, not everyone had the right or privilege to do so. This privilege was reserved only to heroes and monarchs, who exhibited in their lives statesmanship of a high order or won great victories in war. Amongst those who enjoyed this privilege

were Hushang, Jamshid, Lohorasp, Kaikhushro, Gushtasp, Nush Azer, Asfandiār, Ardashir Babakān, Noshervān Adal, and others. This practice reminds us of the honour associated with the privilege of performing the great ceremony of Yagna enjoyed by the Khshatri monarchs of the early days. It also appears from history that this privilege was exclusively reserved for kings who had proved themselves invincible in war. And it was denied by the priests to those who did not possess the necessary qualifications. These Yagnas were known as Ashvamedh Yagna, Rāj Suya Yagna, etc.; and amongst those who performed these ceremonies we find the names of Yudhishtir, Rama-chandra, and others. Thus the occasion of founding a fire was regarded as an extraordinary occasion, and the privilege was not enjoyed by all, but only by those who achieved great things. Under the Parthians the governors of small territories had founded a number of fires in contravention of the time-honoured practice, with the result that when the Parthian rule came to an end, the place of the formation of these small fires was taken by the foundation of the royal Atash-Beherāms.

That these early fires were monuments of victory appears also from a reference in the Avesta. We have a passage

The old Fires, as emblems of Glory. of six sentences in the Atash Nyaish beginning with "Athro ahurahe Mazdāo puthra." The first of these sentences refers to the fire before which we stand. In the second is a reference to the Khoreh of the Iranians and the Kyannians. In the third associated with the name of king Kaikhushro are Mount Asnavad, the khureh of the Kyannians, and lakes Husvangh and Chaechast. In the fourth we come across Mount Raevant and the khureh of the Kyannians. In this passage are preserved traditions of three famous Kyannian monarchs and of the three fires they appear to have founded. Pahlavi writings of a later time throw some light on some of the proper names which appear in the passage. Thus according to the Pahlavi commentary and Bundahishn, Kings Jamshid, Kaikhusro, and Gushtasp established the fires Adar Faroba, Adar Gushasp, and Adar Burjin on the mountains of Gadamandahumad, Asnavand, and Raevant. Now the occurrence of the word "Khureh in each of the sentences already referred to, indicates that these kiblas were erected in honour of great victories, because the Persian word "Khureh" (cf: Avestan "Kharenangha") means amongst other things "glory." Thus these fires were monuments of victory, and the Atashe-Beherāms, erected by Ardashir, were suggested to him by the old Kyannian tradition. The Kiblas of our own times, on the other hand, are not associated with any great victories. They have become in our times only an instrument for keeping alive faith in the community, and owing to the expenditure involved in their foundation, any man who possesses the necessary wealth finds it possible to establish them quite apart from his qualifications for doing so.

We have seen that the last great change associated with the

Traditions associated with Atash-Beherams. foundation of Atashe-Beherām was made by Ardashir. The change introduced by him has been transformed into a tradition now about 1800 years old. Thus it is very misleading to be told as some

people do that the first Atash-Beheram to be founded was under the supervision of the learned Dastur Nairyosangh Dhaval in the year 790 in Sanjan (or "Anahilvad Patan") in the regime of a Hindu King Jadi Rana (or "Karan Rai"). Associated with this story is the tradition that when driven out from Iran for the sake of their religion the Parsi priests met with a storm on their voyage towards Div in Kathiawar. The priests had vowed that if they escaped from the storm they would dedicate a fire to Beheram Yazad, and call it by the name of Atash-Beheram. When they landed on the shores of Hindustan, and settled in Sanjan, they established there the first Atash-Beheram, and the custom has been continued ever since then. We feel justified, however, in rejecting that story. Even admitting for a moment that there was some truth in the tradition, and that in the critical moment when the Iranian fleet was in danger vows had been taken to found an Atash-Beheram, and that those vows had been subsequently acted upon, there is nothing to show that the custom originated first in Hindustan; for we have evidence of this custom in Pahlavi writings which shows that the custom was already well-known in Iran under the Sassanides. There is an interval of about six centuries between the early Atash-Beherams of Iran and the Atash-Beherams of Hindustan; and in this interval hundreds of Atash-Beherams had been established in Iran.

The name of Ardashir is so closely associated with the foundation

The Dynasty of Ardashir. of Atash-Beherams as to demand some notice about himself and his family. On the ruins of an Atash-

Kadeh at Paikuli we find a Pahlavi inscription in which Ardashir is characterized as "the lord of Atash-Kadehs." In another inscription he is called "Herbad," and in a third "Parsi." From this inscription Ardashir appears to have been a Mobed. He must have descended from some family of learned Mobeds who had zealously preserved the traditions of the Zoroastrian Religion in the district of Pars. He must have also belonged to a noble family, for he

belonged to Pars, where his ancestors had once ruled. In the second place in the inscription referred to above he is called "Lord of the Atash-Kadehs," a name given only to one who belonged to the priestly class. According to the Pahlavi commentary the lord of the Atash-Kadeh is especially known as Dastobar, i.e., Dastur. Thirdly, according to the Dasatir, king Aspandiar was a famous warrior, a guardian of Atash-Kadehs, and a wise Mobed. Thus Aspandiar in spite of being a warrior was called a wise Mobed, on account of his having established a number of Atash-Kadehs. Firdausi also supports this view. According to the Shah-Nameh Aspandiar intended to establish a hundred new Atash-Kadehs if he proved victorious over Arjasp. And he had been instrumental in spreading the Religion as far as Hindustan, Constantinople, and other countries. It would thus appear that the Lord or chief of the Atash-Kadehs was known as a Dastur, and Ardashir was undoubtedly known as a Dastur or Mobed. For the same reason every Sassanian monarch on his coronation had to go to a specific Atash-Kadeh, and it was only after this that he was considered qualified to enjoy the position of a protector of the religion. It is for the same reason that the new Dastur in Navsari after his being recognised as a Dastur in the presence of the Anjuman has to go to the Atash-Kadeh on a specific day, where after certain formalities connected with his appointment, he is recognised as the chief of the Atash-Kadeh, and as the chief Dastur.

In the Afrine Rapithwan Ardashir is called the patron of the religion. He is also characterised as the reviver of the sacred religion and one of its many guardians. Ardashir and his successors to the throne were all Parsi Mobeds, who exercised considerable power, and combined in their own persons the functions of temporal and spiritual rulers. During their rule there was a keen conflict between the newly-established Christian Religion and the old Zoroastrian Religion. It was in the same period that two new sects, those of Mani and Mazdak arose, and if they had spread they would have brought about

the destruction of the Zoroastrian and Christian Religions alike, as also of the Parsi Empire. From this fatal danger the country and the Religion were saved by the efforts of Beheram I and Noshirvan Adal. These were followed by Shapur I and Shapur II, by Yazdajard I and Yazdajard II, all of whom were alike devoted to the work of spreading the religion in distant countries and amongst alien communities. If to-day the priestly class is known as Mobed Badshah it must be a reminiscence of those earlier days when their ancestors were in charge of Empires.

According to some historians Ardashir was a Magi. Even if he were not directly descended from a Mobed family the appellation of Mobed or Dastur by which he was known was evidence of his great services to the Religion. It was a usual practice to place a man who belonged to an inferior class in a superior class, if he exhibited remarkable powers of body or mind: and the same practice might have been brought into operation in connection with the king and his descendants. The admirable character of Ardashir is sufficient in itself to entitle him to be ranked amongst the priests. History tells us that great as the influence of the Magi was in Achaemenian times it became still greater under the Sassanides. The Magi occupied the highest position in the state. Ardashir himself had helped substantially in increasing the influence of the priestly class. He had made his chief minister Tansar the guardian of the religious site of Anahita (Arduisur) and had conferred on him the venerated title of a Dastur—a worthy appreciation of the great services he had rendered to his country and his Religion.

THE ATASH-BEHERAMS OF INDIA.

Fire amongst the ancient Aryans was regarded as an object of great veneration, as a spark of the divine energy, as an emblem of the divine purity. It had attained amongst them to the position of Kibla, as a type of the intelligence that permeates nature. The Zoroastrian Religion welcomed this old Mazdyasnian Religion, and even raised it in public esteem by giving to it a religious impress. In old Iranvej some of the Peshdadian and Kyannian monarchs had established such Kiblas in memory of great political or religious events. We have even references to the establishment of Kiblas amongst the Achaemenians after the overthrow of the Kyannian dynasty. When the Muluke Tavâyaf or the Parthian rule begins, we find the rulers of the practically independent districts or sub-divisions of the old Iranian empire, establishing a number of Atash-Kadehs in their own provinces. When the Sassanide dynasty came into power there were established a number of Atash-Beherams, and the honour of first founding them belongs to Ardashir Bâbakân. With the destruction of the Sassanide empire Parsi rule in Iran comes to an end, and a small section of the race emigrates to India. Confronted with calamities in the course of their migrations the fugitives take vows to establish Atash-Beherams, and when they settled in Sanjan they fulfilled these vows by the establishment of Atash-Beherams in the country.

"Two men should recite the Kusti prayers, and then joining hands, should say the Sarosh Baj. Next they should hold in their hands a spoon containing the dust of sandal-wood, and bring it under the heat of

The Ritual Associated with the Foundation.
sixteen different kinds of fire used for different purposes in such a manner that the sandal-wood dust would catch fire. This fire should then be applied to other sandal-wood or ordinary fuel-

wood, and this new fire should be kept at a distance in a hole dug apart from the old fire, and allow it to burn down. This ceremony is to be performed ninety-one times, and is known as the ceremony of selecting or straining the fire. Over these fires thus selected have to be recited the Yasna and the Vendidad. After these ceremonies have been gone through in connection with the sixteen fires, the Yasna and the Vendidad have again to be recited, and finally all the fires gathered together are placed in a bowl or crowned on a day specially appointed in the presence of a large public assembly."

Where and under what circumstances were these ceremonies connected with the founding of an Atash-Beheram first introduced, and who introduced them? Were these ceremonies handed down from the earliest times, or were they an innovation of later days? An examination of these questions will throw new light on various matters. (1) As we have already stated, fires were enthroned in the earliest days in memory of great events. But we have no references either in the Avesta or in later writings to the ceremonies associated with their foundation, and we have no reason to assume that the ceremonies in vogue at present were the original ceremonies.

(2) Secondly, we have no references in the Pahlavi Pazend works to the ceremonies associated with the foundation of the famous Kiblas known as the Atashe-Vâhrâms under the Sassanides.

(3) Thirdly, we have no information even about the foundation of the first Atash-Behram in Sanjan in India after the destruction of the Sassanide empire.

(4) Fourthly, the Zoroastrians of Gujarat seem to be entirely ignorant of the details of these ceremonies even as late as four centuries ago. We find them in the year 1580 A. D. writing to the

Dastur of Iran to give them information as to the ceremonies necessary for founding an Atash-Beheram. If there had been preserved any references about these ceremonies as they were performed in connection with the Atash-Beheram at Sanjan, the Zoroastrians of later times would not have sent for information from the Dastur of Iran. The allusions to the ceremonies which are to be found in the Persian Rivayats are not derived from earlier traditions, they are founded on the obiter-dicta of the Irani Dastur. It is also to be noted that the Zoroastrians of Gujarat referred this matter to Iran not because there were any divisions of opinion amongst themselves, but because they were entirely unaware of the existence of any such ceremonies.

(5) Fifthly, with regard to the ceremonies mentioned in the Rivayats there is no foundation for the statement that the ceremonies prescribed by the Dasturs of Iran and India are suggested by the eighth Fargard of the Vendidad.

(6) Sixthly, even assuming that the ceremonies now in vogue had been actually practised in connection with the foundation of Atash-Beherams under the Sassanides, and that descriptions of the ceremonies contained in Pahlavi Pazend literature of the times disappeared subsequently with the destruction of this literature, and that the references in the Rivayats are founded on the earlier traditions of these ceremonies, we are not in a position to prove that we have been following to-day these earlier ceremonies.

The ceremonies associated with the foundation of Atash-Beherams are traced to references in the eighth Fargard of the Vendidad. The descriptions of the ceremonies we find in this Fargard, though associated with certain fires, do not appear to be connected with the foundation of Atash-Beherams. The words "Atash-Beheram" do not occur in the

Fargard. In the next place we have in the Vendidad described to us fires serving sixteen different purposes. But these references are to fires dedicated to anti-Zoroastrian purposes like that of burning a dead body or other decaying matter, and to the fire of the oven, to fire used by artisans, and so on (VIII, 81).

Vendidad VIII, 73-78 gives us the following description: "What are Mazdyasnians to do if when travelling on foot or running, (or going in a boat), or riding, they come across people who burn filthy matter (nasu)?" In answer to this question the Vendidad prescribes certain ceremonies to be performed over fire which is then to be removed to a proper place.

It is significant that this passage refers to a fire which is used for burning a dead body or other decaying matter. There is no reference here to the enthroning of fire in an Atash-Beheram on a pre-appointed occasion, and to the ceremonies to be performed on the occasion. The passage refers only to the preservation of fire whenever it is put to any wrong use. Even when a Zoroastrian is in a hurry going either on horseback, or running, or in some kind of conveyance, and finds fire associated with filth he is enjoined to stop on his way and to remove the fire to a proper place.

The same question occurs in the sixth Fargard of the Vendidad not in connection with fire, but in connection with water into which any filth has been cast. In answer to the question there is an injunction that even at the risk of his life a Zoroastrian should remove the filth from the water (VI, 26-27).

This last passage throws light on the injunction to remove the fire to a Dad-Gah. The same question is asked in reference to fire and water, and in answer we are enjoined not to lose any time in removing the filth from the water, and also in removing the fire to a Dad-Gah. There is no reference to the foundation of an Atash-Beheram in this passage. The object of the Vendidad injunction is

not to allow a fire to be destroyed or extinguished, which has been used either by a Zoroastrian or a non-Zoroastrian for any purpose, but to preserve it in a proper place. In other words, whenever there is a likelihood of a fire, which has been used for any industrial purpose being extinguished, the idea of the Vendidad is to preserve such fire and not allow it to die out or to be neglected.

The sixteen uses to which fire can be put according to the Vendidad, has given rise to the present ceremony of collecting together in connection with the foundation of an Atash-Beheram sixteen fires, to which has been added one more the fire of electricity. But these uses of the fire derive their importance not from the number, but from the circumstances of the epoch in which they originated. The sixteen uses referred to are only illustrations of some amongst the many uses to which fire was put in the days of the Vendidad ; and if the spirit of the Vendidad is to be adhered to, the injunction refers to the preservation of fire for all the many different purposes to which it may be put with advance in knowledge. There is no indication here of gathering together fires used for different purposes to establish an Atash-Beheram, but only an injunction to prevent from extinction every species of fire which serves any useful purpose, and to take it to a Dad-Gâh, where it could be preserved.

This original idea of the Vendidad seems to have been preserved in a custom observed by the Irani-Zoroastrians. Amongst the latter there is a practice of taking to an Atash-Kadeh any fire before which prayers and ceremonies have been performed, and they consider it meritorious to merge this fire with the fire of an Âdrân. This is quite unlike the practice of Indian Zoroastrians, who remove the fire to their own household hearth. The Irani-Zoroastrians, moreover, often take their own household fire used for the purposes of cooking to an Âdrân, and allege as a reason the hardships imposed on the fire. So also they never allow any kind of fire to be extinguished, but take it to the Daityagâtu according to the injunctions of the Vendidad,

This custom is reminiscent of the practice which must have prevailed in the days of the Vendidad.

We find the word "Dâityagâtu" employed in the Vendidad as the name of the place where fires have to be removed. From this word are derived the Pahlavi **The Dâityagatu of the Vendidad.** "Dâd-Gâhs," and the Pazend Persian "Dâd-Gâh."

It means "a proper place." It is not only used in connection with fire, but also in connection with fuel-wood. The verb associated with it is "avabaraaiti," which means "to carry" or "take," and not "to found," or "establish." The word that corresponds to the idea of establishing or preserving apart anything in the Avesta are various verbal forms derived from "nidath" or "nidhâ" or "nishadh." From the last of these three roots we have the Pahlavi "neshândan" and Pazend-Persian "nishastan" used in connection with the enthroning of fire. We do not find any such word in this passage of the Vendidad, which corroborates our hypothesis that the word "Dâityagâtu" is not employed in connection with the foundation of an Atash-Beheram, but refers to a proper place where fire has to be removed under certain circumstances.

The question may now be raised, "what is this place referred to as Dâityagâtu?" Evidently, it can only be used for denoting the old Atash-Kadehs. We are familiar with the fires established on elevated spots by the Peshdadian and Kyaunian monarchs in memory of great events. We have traces of these famous Kiblas preserved in the Avesta and in the Pahlavi and Pazend writings. These Kiblas were the early AtashDâd Gâhs, and are referred to as Dâityagâtu in the Vendidad. The Bundahishn refers to the fires Adar Frobâ, Adar Gushasp, and Adar Burjin, established on mounts Gadmardhumand, Asnavand, and Raevant, by kings Jamshed, Kaikhushro, and Gushasp. In the Pazend writings (Atesh Nyâish and a shrine Rapithwan) we have a reference to other fires being established in addition to Adar Khureh, Adar Khordâd, etc: Thus in the age preceding the

Vendidad various fires had been established at places known as Dād-Gāhs, and these were the places referred to as Daityagātu in the Vendidad in connection with the injunction to preserve fires of various kinds.

The word "Dād-gāh" is not the name of a fire, but the name of a place for preserving not only fire, but also various other objects. This word has subsequently been transformed so as to mean fire. The expression "Atashe-Dād-Gāh" and not "Atash-Dād Gāh" means "the fire kept in a proper or sanctioned place," and its simpler form "Dād-Gāh" instead of indicating the name of a place has come to mean, in subsequent times, "fire" itself.

Vendidad VIII, 74-96, speaks of different degrees of meritorious-

Grades of meritori-
ousness in remov-
ing fires to the
Daityagatu.

ness in removing fires to a Dād-Gāh. We are not justified, however, in believing that these different grades of meritoriousness are based on the greater or smaller amount of hardship inflicted on fire. If

this were so, it would follow that the Zoroastrian Religion gives no encouragement to industry and artistic ability. The Pahlavi translators and commentators of the Vendidad never accepted this view, though it is commonly held to-day amongst our learned circles. When and under what circumstances did this mistaken opinion then arise? Though the early Iranian people were famous for their construction of irrigation canals, palatial buildings, for their skill in carving in stone, and in gardening, they do not seem to have excelled in such arts as require the use of fire, and we can account for this by supposing that mistaken ideas with regard to the injunctions of their religion hampered their development in this direction. Even to-day a Zoroastrian refrains from taking to the work of a blacksmith or a goldsmith under the impression that by taking to that work he would be inflicting some kind of hardship on the fire. Judging this question from the point of view of the spirit of our Religion this idea is false.

and misleading. It throws the nation back in the development of its arts and industries. It retards its material prosperity, and is thus inimical to its welfare.

We find two grades of meritoriousness arising from taking a fire to a Dad-Gah mentioned in the Vendidad. In one case the meritoriousness is due to the prevention of harmful consequences. In the other case it is due to the better utilization of fire. Thus we are told about the harm arising from burning with the help of fuel a dead body or any other decaying matter. Thus it is considered an act of piety to prevent a dead body or any decaying matter from contact with fire, and to take the fire after certain formalities to a Dad-Gah (Vendidad VIII, 81). In the second case it is considered meritorious to take to a proper place fire which is used for melting tin and zinc; still more meritorious to do so in connection with fire that is used for melting iron ore, and silver; and most meritorious of all to take fire to a proper place which is used for melting gold (VIII, 87-93). Evidently there can be no question here of the meritoriousness being graded according to the amount of hardship imposed on fire, otherwise we would expect more hardship on fire, when it is used for melting iron than when it is used for melting gold. The only principle that we can discover underlying these graded acts of meritoriousness is the relative usefulness and preciousness of different metals.

Secondly, there are instructions in the Vendidad about performing certain ceremonies on a fire which has been in contact with impure matter before it is taken to a Dad-Gah. These ceremonies are called "the ceremonies of selecting or straining of fire"—such a ceremony being considered necessary in order to get rid of the impurities associated with the fire which is thus brought into contact with impure matter. But the fires which are used for industrial purposes do not require to be purified, and we find no injunction in the Vendidad

about the performance of such ceremonies in connection with these kinds of fires. Thus the fires used for industrial purposes need not be selected and purified before they are taken to a Dād-Gāh.

Thirdly, the injunction in the Vendidad with regard to purifying by certain ceremonies fire which has been brought into contact with a dead body or with impure matter indicates that such an act (of bringing fire into contact with impure matter) has been considered impious. But there is no injunction against using fire for industrial and artistic purposes, and such fire is to be taken to a Dād-Gāh without restricting or abruptly terminating its industrial use. There is evidently no intention in the Vendidad to condemn the use of fire for artistic and industrial purposes, and it is false and misleading to suggest the idea of hardship inflicted on fire by its use for such purposes.

Fourthly, just as according to the Rivayats the fire that has been in contact with a dead body has to be deposited in ninety-one different holes, and the Yasna and the Vendidad have to be recited ninety-one times before them, so the fire of the household hearth is also to be deposited in ninety-one places with a similar number of recitals. Though in both these places the degree of meritoriousness is the same, this grade of meritoriousness cannot evidently depend on the hardship on fire. If that was so, we are obliged to assume that the hardship inflicted upon the fire of the household hearth is as great as the hardship inflicted on fire that has been brought into contact with dead bodies, and the former would be considered as impure as the latter. Such an assumption would be exceedingly unreasonable. Even the Vendidad itself belies this assumption, for whereas the meritoriousness of carrying to a Dād-Gāh a fire in contact with dead bodies is regarded as equivalent to an offering of 10,000 pieces or piles of wood to fire, the meritoriousness of carrying to a Dād-Gāh the fire of a true believer's house is considered equivalent only to the offering of ten pieces or piles.

Fifthly, the unreasonableness of this assumption is also apparent, if we consider the hardship inflicted on fires used for other purposes than those of industry and art. We have already seen that the fire of a true believer's house has been ranked very low in the Vendidad. It becomes difficult to account for the entirely different view of the teachings of the Rivayats, where we find a comparison made between the fire of a true believer, and a fire that has been brought into contact with a dead body. It is absurd to ask us to believe that the hardship inflicted on fire of the latter type may be compared to the hardship inflicted on the fire of a true believer's household, where men look after it and prevent it from being extinguished, and feed it day and night with incense.

In the age of the Rivayats both the spiritual leaders of the people and the flock whom they led, had lost sight of the truths of the Religion in the midst of their hardships and adversities. The priestly class had become impoverished. It had lost all its sources of income. All kinds of doubts had arisen amongst them on questions of Religion, and they strove to obtain enlightenment from the Dasturs of Iran of their own times. This brought about a religious revival amongst the Indian Zoroastrians. But this revival was confined only to matters of ceremonials. The questions and answers contained in the Rivayats show that the Zoroastrians of those days were neither desirous nor fitted to understand the religious philosophy of Zoroastrianism or to study the languages of the Zoroastrian Scriptures from the philosophical point of view. So also the contemporaneous Dasturs of Iran suffering from centuries of hardships inflicted by foreign rule were not any better fitted than the Dasturs in India for the task of enlightening their coreligionists. Thus we have from this period the beginnings of a large number of unnecessary ceremonies and customs founded upon the ipsi dixits of the Dasturs of Iran; and ever since customs and traditions and ceremonials have acquired an artificial

The Age of the Rivayats.

importance. In times subsequent to the age of the Rivayats, that is to say, during the last two centuries, these ceremonials have been inordinately multiplied as the result of conditions which have not altogether disappeared.

As long as the priestly class is not well-equipped for its task by education and character, it will be impossible for priests to distinguish between what is desirable and undesirable in matters of ceremonials, and they will cling indiscriminately to all ceremonials. Prayers and ceremonials are their only sources of living, and they will naturally fight with all their power against encroachments on these sources of income. An uneducated priesthood has for its natural corollary a community of laymen ignorant and fanatic in matters of Religion. If the priestly class to which I am proud to belong is enabled to find the means of an honorable livelihood, it will naturally become the true spiritual guide of the community. It behoves all the leading men of the community to come together and co-operate in the work of organising schemes for educating and elevating the Parsi priesthood.

The ceremonies connected with the selection of fires which are

**The Selection of
Fires. The Early
Importance of
Animals.**

now in vogue are not to be found in the Vendidad.

Some of the fires known to earlier times have been replaced by others more familiar to a later age.

One example will be sufficient by way of an illustration on this occasion—the example of the Mints.

All who are familiar with history know that in the age of the Vendidad there were no mints, nor was there any metallic currency like our own. The medium of exchange was mostly certain animals. The labour of artisans and workmen was paid for according to the nature of the work and the social rank of the worker by a certain number of animals or beasts of burden large or small. (Vendidad VII, 41-43). In this remote period animals constituted the principal wealth of

the people, and a man was considered wealthy in proportion to the number of animals he possessed. He who possessed no animals or a few animals was regarded as poor, and we find Zarathushtra in the Gathas appealing to Ahura Mazda with regard to his own condition as of one who possessed no animals at all. Thus in the Avesta amongst the different kinds of blessings for wealth we find people blessed with cattle and other animals, amongst others Paourushasp, father of Zarathushtra, and Athavyān, father of Faredun are said to be so blessed. Just as in times when gold and silver or precious stones like diamonds came into use, men were often named after these metals or stones though they might be poor and possess none, so in the earlier times when wealth was reckoned in terms of animals, it was usual to give names derived from the names of animals. Thus "asp" which means "a horse," "usht," the name of "a camel," and "gav" that of "a cow," were all used for naming individuals. The Gathas and the rest of the Avesta are also full of injunctions for manifesting mercy to innocent animals, and taking care of them. Men are asked to respect and to cherish them on account of their usefulness.

Our ancestors in the past looked with considerable veneration and affection towards animals, mainly because of **Mercy towards animals.** their importance for the purposes of agriculture and

garden culture. Agriculture was their occupation, and there could have been nothing more important than cattle and other animals for agriculture and industry. Amongst the early Aryans animals were an indispensable part of the house-hold and the sole source of livelihood. It was Zarathushtra's great achievement, as we find from the Gathas, to have converted the nomadic semi-barbarous Aryans to a settled agricultural life with fixed habitations, and means of earning an honorable livelihood. The teachings of the Gathas in this connection have been further emphasised in the Vendidad. Agriculture is given an eminent place as a means of living a settled family life; the agricultural industry is considered to be as meritorious as other righteous acts, and as the foundation of communal welfare,

material and spiritual. It is a pious act to cultivate uncultivated land and make it fruitful. These injunctions in the Gathas and the Vendidad are a clear indication of the progress which the Aryan people had made from the times of Zarathushtra.

Let us now return to the subject proper of our discussion. Though the age of the Vendidad was familiar with metals like gold, and even with the use of these metals in the shape of utensils of daily use, it was not familiar with a metallic currency, the common medium of exchange being mostly animals. The present custom of using the fire of a mint in the ceremonials connected with the foundation of an Atash-Beheram, must therefore have arisen long after the times of the Vendidad. In later times we find mints at Sistan and Tabrastan, Kabul and Herat, Samarkand and Isfahan, Hamadan and Nishapur, Istakhr and Daragard—in all about seventy-five of them. The association of the fire of mints with the foundation of Kiblas must have taken place in these later times. Such changes in the fires used for founding Atash-Behrams throw light on the development of arts and industries in the Parsi Empire. Industries which were unknown in the age of the Vendidad are familiar to the Achaemenian and Sassanian times, and we have a number of coins with the names of Sassanian monarchs. When metallic coins became current as a measure of values and medium of exchange it was considered necessary to associate the fire of the mints with the ceremonies of establishing Atash-Behrams. The Dasturs of the times were wise in introducing this change in the ceremonials to suit changing circumstances. The following table will show what particular fires indicated in the Vendidad have been dropped in later times, while other fires have taken their place, and how the number "sixteen" has been arrived at.

	According to the Vendidad.	Degree of Meritoriousness.	According to the Rivayats.	Number of Yasnas and Vendidads.
1	Fire in contact with dead bodies	Equivalent to offering 10,000 pieces or piles of wood to Atash-Gäh ...	Fire in contact with impurities ...	91
2	Fire in contact with impurities	Eq: to offering 1,000 pieces, etc.	Fire used for dyeing.	80
3	Fire in contact with dirt.	Eq: to offering 5,00 pieces etc.	Fire of the bath ...	70
4	A potter's fire	Eq: to offering 4,00 etc.	Potter's fire ...	61
5	Fire used in making earthenware objects ...	Eq: to offering a few surplus pieces	Brick maker's fire ...	75
6	Fire used by the brazier, etc.	Eq: to offering a few pieces etc.	Fire used by the brazier (Fire whose smoke throws a Fakir into a trance)	50
7	The goldsmith's fire ...	Eq: to offering 100 pieces, etc.	Alchemist's fire ...	60
8	The silversmith's fire ...	Eq: to offering 90 pieces, etc.	The fire of the Mint.	55
9	The ironsmith's fire ...	Eq: to offering 80 pieces, etc.	Ironsmith's fire ...	61
10	Earthenware maker's fire.	Eq: to offering 70 pieces, etc.	Fire of instruments manufacturing factory	61
11	Fire of the baker's oven.	Eq: to offering 60 pieces, etc.	Fire of the baker's oven	61
12	Fire of a burning heap.	Eq: to offering 50 pieces, etc.	Fire of the distillery.	61
13	Fire of the tin-maker ...	Eq: to offering 40 pieces, etc.	Fire of an army camp	35
14	Fire of a shepherd ...	Eq: to offering 30 pieces, etc.	Fire of a shepherd ...	30
15	Fire of an army camp ...	Eq: to offering 20 pieces, etc.	Fire drawn from electricity	90
16	Fire of a faithful Zoroastrian's hearth ...	Eq: to offering 10 pieces, etc.	Fire of a faithful Zoroastrian's hearth.	91

In this table we can trace the difference between the fires mentioned in the Vendidad and those described in the Rivayats, and we can also trace the changes in occupations, industries, and commercial pursuits that occurred in the interval between the age of the Vendidad and later ages. It would appear that during the Sassanian period amongst the industries that came into vogue and acquired importance

were those of dyeing, baking, tinning, alchemy, and operations connected with the mints.

We have no desire to call into question the tradition connected with the foundation of Kiblas. Amongst the few **The Vendidad and** religious associations and traditions that have been **the Rivayats.** handed down from our remote ancestors is our veneration for fire as a symbol of Ahura Mazda. Our object on this occasion is to indicate the differences in the ceremonials connected with the foundation of Kiblas, as they are described in **the Vendidad** and in the **Rivayats.**

1. Whilst we find in the Vendidad a clear injunction to preserve the 16 kinds of fire which were in use in those days alike amongst the followers of the religion and others; in the Rivayats the place of some of these fires is taken by others that have come into use in later ages, and the number 16 is increased to 17.

2. Whereas in the Vendidad we are asked not to put to any wrong use any of the 16 fires, in the Rivayats we are asked to bring together all these different fires.

3. In the Vendidad whenever any of these 16 fires is put to a wrong use there is an injunction on the faithful to remove it to a Dād-Gāh and to watch after it. In the Rivayats, on the other hand, we are asked to collect all these fires with a view to founding an Atash-Beheram. In the Vendidad there is evidently an intention of bringing all the different fires to a common place where they could be watched and preserved, as often times it is otherwise difficult to preserve the fires used for different purposes from destruction or abuse. In later times it is considered meritorious to found an Atash-Beheram from these collected fires.

4. In the Vendidad there is an injunction to strain and purify only one kind of fire, viz., that which has been in contact with a dead

body. In the Rivayats all the 16 or 17 kinds of fires have to be purified and ceremonials are instituted in connection with this purification.

5. Whereas in the Vendidad no ceremonial is prescribed even for purifying the fire that has been in contact with dead bodies, in the Rivayats a large number of Yasnas and Vendidads have to be recited and ceremonials have to be observed in connection with fires. The multiplication of these prayers and ceremonials is evidently inspired by a desire to indicate the importance of fire, though this inordinate multiplication of ceremonials is more likely to compromise its importance.

6. Whereas in the Vendidad the meritoriousness arises from removing a fire to a Dād-Gāh and preserving it from abuse, in the Rivayats the meritoriousness is supposed to result from saving these different fires from the hardships inflicted on them, and the prayers recited over them.

7. In the Vendidad the degree of meritoriousness is measured by the number of objects (fire-wood) offered to the fire; in the Rivayats it is measured by the number of prayers recited. Thus in the Vendidad there is a principle guiding the grades of meritoriousness; in the Rivayats there is a complete absence of any such principle. For example in the Vendidad the act of removing to a Dād-Gāh a fire that has come into contact with dead bodies, is equivalent to offering 10,000 pieces or piles of wood to fire, and the act of removing similarly the fire of a Zoroastrian's hearth is equivalent in merit to offering 10 pieces or piles of fire. In the Rivayats, on the other hand, we have an injunction to treat both these kinds of fire in exactly the same manner by placing them in 91 holes and reciting over them 91 Yasnas and Vendidads. Thus there is a complete absence of any general rule or principle in the prescriptions of the Rivayats.

8. In the Vendidad we have an injunction in order to purify a fire that has come into contact with dead bodies to place it in 9 holes and strain it 9 times. This 9 has been multiplied into 91 in the Rivayats which were composed only about 350 years ago.

9. Even this multiplication of 9 into 91 does not seem to have satisfied the latter-day Dasturs of India, and they began to call into question and criticise these prescriptions of the Rivayats. On a reference to Iran only as late as 80 or 90 years back the then Dastur of Iran categorically declared that as many as 91 fires that had come into contact with dead bodies were necessary for the foundation of an atash-Beheram. Thus the one fire in contact with dead bodies was multiplied into 91, and these 91 fires were each to be placed in 91 holes with their attendant ceremonials. The difficulties with these ceremonials were realised in Iran itself when the moslem King Aga Mahamad Khan attacked Kerman and destroyed an Atash-Beheram of that city. The Dasturs of Iran in 1795 attempted to restore this atash-Beheram, but found it impossible to collect together the 91 kinds of different fires that had come into contact with dead bodies. We shall let these Dasturs speak in their own words in a letter that they addressed to the akabars of the community in Bombay: "as the Atash-Beheram in Kerman has been destroyed we find it difficult to gather together 91 different fires that have come into contact with dead bodies. But as in India the population in every city is large we appeal to you to collect 91 fires, purify them, and forward them to us." This is a telling description of the difficulties of Iranians. Even in thickly populated cities it is difficult to gather together 91 fires of this kind, not to speak of the enormously greater difficulties of reciting over each of these fires 91 Yasnas and Vendidads with the attendant ceremonials. But the difficulties do not stop here. According to the categorical pronouncement of a late Dastur a similar multiplication in the collection of fires takes place in connection with the fires used in different industries. Thus for example there are the fires of the blacksmith, the dyer, the

potter, the coppersmith, etc. And the prayers and ceremonials have not to be performed only in connection with one specimen each of these different kinds of fire, 61 different fires have to be collected of the fire of the potter, 80 different fires have to be collected from 80 different dyeing-factories, 55 different fires have to be collected from 55 mints, and a corresponding number of strainings, and purifications have to take place in connection with each of them. Thus the total number of fires has increased from 16 to over 1,000, and the number of Yasnas and Vendidads has increased to about 75,000.

It is unfortunate that our attempts at preserving ceremonials should be foiled by follies of this kind. There is a limit and a sense of proportion in everything, and even the best and most valuable of customs and institutions may be discredited by an exaggeration of their importance. Moreover, conflicting pronouncements by our priests and spiritual guides undermine our faith and give rise to doubts and differences. We have a fresh instance of this in connection with the foundation of the new Atash-Beheram in Bombay. A late Dastur after it was founded endeavoured to throw doubts upon the propriety of the ceremonials, taking his stand on a dogma of an Irani Dastur and on a doubtful Pahlavi Text. This action of the Dastur led to considerable bitterness in the community. We have here an unpleasant exhibition of the extraordinary transformation in our own times of exceedingly simple and rational injunctions of the Vendidad.

The custom of founding a Kibla of fire has been handed down to us from our ancestors of the earliest times. Those **Devotion to fire.** ancestors of ours looked with greater devotion to fire than we do, as they were familiar with the purpose and meaning of the custom. We have a typical example of the devotion of our ancestors in the later days of the Parsi Empire, in connection with the district of Azarbaejān. When this province passed into the hands of Islam in the days of the Khalif Umar Ibn

Khatab, it was full of Atash-Kadehs. An understanding was arrived at the time between the Irani chiefs and the khalif's lieutenant Hodaifah by which the Iranians paid 8,00,000 dirams on condition that the Atash-Kadehs were to be left intact and the Iranians were to be allowed to follow their religion undisturbed. These Iranians knew the objects which had brought into existence these Atash-Kadehs. We have spoken of these objects already. But these Kiblas serve a higher purpose than those that we have already noticed. They are emblematic of the soul. They remind us of the need of ever keeping alive our spiritual ideals, and of a pure life in view of the larger destinies of our spirit. (Yasna 62, 6-7).

Different countries and different ages have different methods of preserving the memory of important political events. **The early practice of raising memorials.** Amongst the Iranians such memory was preserved in association with religious institutions, with a view to strengthen the devotion and loyalty of the people towards their religion. Thus we find amongst the Peshdadians Atash-Kadehs founded by Kings Hoshang, Jamshed, Faredun. They also organised Jashans in thanksgiving for their victories, e. g., the Jamshedi-Naoroz, the Jashane-Sadeh, the Khordad Sal, mehergān, etc: Though these Jashans are not observed to-day on their proper occasions they have preserved the memory of the glorious deeds of our ancestors. After the Peshdadians Atash-Kadehs were founded by the Kyanian Kings Kekhushro, Loharasp, Gushtasp, Neeshazar, Asfandiar, and others. We have no historical evidence of the foundation of Atash-Kadehs by the Achaemenian monarchs. Nevertheless, from the inscriptions on rocks that they have left behind, it would appear that they too must have founded such Atash-Kadehs. In the Bihistun inscriptions Darius says "I have built again all the Atash-Kadehs which were destroyed by Gaumāt Magus." The ruins of the palaces and astodāns of the Achaemenian monarchs bear witness to the reverence with which they looked on fire. On the Nakhsha

Rustam Rock Darius stands with reverence before a burning-fire borne in a vessel on a high altar in the open sky. A Greek philosopher in a letter addressed to Noshewan Adel whilst conveying his good wishes to the monarch writes "May you become like Beheman, (the Achaemenian monarch Ardeshir Darāzdast), who built 1200 Atash-Kadehs following the custom of the Kyanians!" After the Achaemicians the governors of the different provinces under the Ascanian rulers seem to have built Atash-Kadehs in their own districts, and later on the Sassanians built Atashe-Beherāms in memory of great events. (Though these Jashans and other memorials were organised by monarchs during their own lives, the Zoroastrian Religion enjoins on us to cherish the memory of these famous men through their Farohars or in the name of the Farohars). According to Edrisi there was a famous Atash-Beherām in the city of Kāzārun newly re-built by Firoz Yazadajard, where the fire had been kept burning for hundreds of years. Ibn Hokal tells us of Atash-Beherāms in his own times known as the Khifeh, the Kalādan, and the Masubām Atash-Beherāms. It is necessary to state here that though hundreds of years before the Sassanian rule Kiblas of fire known as Dād-Gāhs were in existence, foreign historians and even Pahlavi writers called these Kiblas Atash-Beherāms, as that was the name given to the Kiblas in the Sassanian times. Amongst these early Kiblas may be mentioned Ādar Farobār, Ādar Burjin, Ādar Gushasp, (Bundahishn), Āzaremeher, Āzarebeherām, Āzarenush, Āzareāin, Āzarekhurin, Āzarebujin, Āzarezartosht, and Naobahar (Shah-Nameh Baurhan-e-Kantāy).

Thus the Dād-Gāhs which existed amongst the Peshdadians and the Kyanians, were associated with great historical events. In the later times of the Vendidad there ensued the practice of removing to a Dāityagātu the fires that had come into contact with dead bodies, and the fires used in different arts and industries which might be put to a wrong use. These Dāityagātus were just the Dād-Gāhs of the

Peshdadian and Kyanian times. In the Achaemenian and Ascanian times fire-temples were built under different names, and finally under the Sassanians we have the Atashe-Beherâms constructed in memory of great political events. In our own days in India we build Atash-Beherâms at considerable expense and trouble, not for commemorating great events, but for strengthening the communal devotion towards the Kibla. Thus the practice of building Kiblas of fire dates from the earliest times, and changes in details of ceremonials and in aim and purpose have been introduced in response to changes in circumstances.

I have already noticed as of special importance the change in purpose in connection with the foundation of Atash-Beherâms in India in our times, and also the extraordinary elaboration of ceremonials that has occurred. Changes in ceremonials and customs in response to changes in time, place, and circumstances, are neither good nor bad in themselves. But they must not be introduced without proper reason, and must be grounded in the spirit of the religion. We have already noticed however that in the matter of ceremonials we have entirely departed from the spirit of the injunctions in the Vendidad, and have added so enormously to their number and nature as to make them difficult, if not impossible, to carry out. What is more, we are running the danger of diminishing the communal devotion towards ceremonials by making them expensive and difficult of being performed; and we would especially draw to this danger the attention of all those who are constantly preaching to us to preserve intact all the prayers and ceremonials as we find them to-day.

THE FINAL RESTING-PLACE OF THE PARSI.

The question has been asked "what kind of structure should we have amongst us Parsis for the final disposal of our dead bodies?" Though we find clear instruction on this subject in the Vendidad, as has often happened in connection with other buildings dedicated to other purposes, so in the case of our final resting-places, numerous changes have taken place with the lapse of time. These changes have not merely occurred in reference to the structure. What is more, the very name applied to this structure has undergone such changes of meaning as to give rise to considerable confusion of thought. Further, concurrently with these changes in structure and name have taken place changes in connection with the ceremonies and prayers connected with the dead. To the original short and simple selections from the Gathas which constituted the solemn "Geh-Sarna" ceremony in the earlier days have been added in our own times the seven "Has" of the "Ahuna Vaiti" Gatha. Even admitting that this addition to the "Geh-sarna" ceremony is as valuable in its effect as the original selections, it is still doubtful if it can have the same effect as these selections. In the second place with regard to the ceremonies associated with laying the foundation of a Dakhma in the passages of the Vendidad where there are injunctions for building places for the final disposal of the dead, we do not find any reference or mention of any kind of ceremony. These ceremonies are only to be found in the writings of a later age. Though we know our present places for the disposal of the dead by the name of 'Dakhma,' this name is hardly appropriate in view of the internal evidences of the Avestan writings connected with this name. Vendidad VII, 49-52, and 57-58, gives the name "Dakhma" or "Dakhma uzadaea" to one of several methods of disposing of dead bodies, and denounces it as something impious. Secondly, the term "Aram-gah," which is the Persian equivalent of the Avestan "Airim-gatu," is not the special

name of our final resting-place, because this term is employed in the Vendidad for a quiet and isolated place where men who have been polluted by contact with the dead, and women after child-birth or women in menses, could resort till they get purified (Vendidad IX, 33, and XVI, 8). We shall discuss this question about the confusion of names on a later occasion. With regard to the structure we find in the Vendidad the term " Hvare-Daresya " corresponding to which we have the Pazend-Persian " Khurshed negirashna " applied to the recognised mode of disposing of dead bodies. The word means " so to expose a dead body as to allow the rays of the sun directly to fall on it " (Vendidad V, 13-14). The place which is thus to be selected is described in answer to a question as to where a dead body is to be carried and deposited.

" On the most elevated spot where the attention of wild dogs could be drawn and where the body could be seen by flesh-eating animals " (Vendidad VI, 44, 45). " On this spot which is to be elevated and levelled with the help of rubble and stone, or built with bricks and mortar, the dead body is to be deposited naked and without any clothes so that wild dogs and other flesh-eating animals could clearly see it (VIII, 10). "

Thus four things according to the Vendidad have to be kept in mind in constructing the final resting-place for the dead. (1) The structure is to be made of stone, or brick and mortar, or plain earth. (2) It ought to be built on a hill or on a level spot on the top of a mountain. (3) The dead body ought to be open to the sky and there should be no covering on it. (4) It should be so exposed as to attract the notice of flesh-eating animals.

Were there any structures built according to these injunctions in

The early Aram-gah. the early days, and if so, where and when were they thus built? It appears from the accounts of European travellers in Iran that whereas no traces of such struc-

tures are to be found in the Achaemenian period, on the other hand we have what appear to be the ruins of a different type of structure conforming to these injunctions of the Vendidad. Amongst these some appear to be levelled ground built in brick and mortar without any walls on the top of hills far away from water, vegetation (agriculture), and human habitation. According to the spirit of the religion both the body and the bones that are left over when the flesh has been disposed off ought to be consigned to an elevated spot. We find traces of such structures on elevated spots known as "asto-dâns" intended for the disposal of bones. Most probably the dead bodies must have been originally deposited on the spot in the vicinity of these Astodâns. Travellers have reported to us ruins of flat platforms built on the hills where these Astodâns are to be found, e. g. near Mûrgâb, Bihistun, Shiraz, Rae, Armenia, Takhte Jamshed (Persepolis). Possibly all these platforms may not have been intended for the disposal of the dead; still as no traces of any wall have been noticed by travellers it may not be wrong to conjecture, as Ervads Tehemuras Anklesaria and Sheriarji have done, that they were ârâm-gâhs. As injunctions have been laid down for building separate structures for the disposal of the dead body and the bones, and as both alike are to be built on an elevated spot, the convenience of building them near each other may well be understood. Thus on Mount Pâsârgard we find the astodân of the Achaemenian king Kurush, and on the same mountain we find flat open platforms. Moreover, the same kind of inscription referring to Kurush, which is to be found on the astodân, is to be found on some of the pillars which support the platform. These inscriptions must have been intended to keep alive the memory of the departed. On Mount Nakhsha Rustam near Persipolis we find a number of astodâns. From an inscription of one of these it appears to be that of Darius Hystâspis (the first Darab) and others must have contained the bones of other famous men. We also find near these Astodâns wide well-built platforms open to the sky. Some of these

platforms would appear to be reception-rooms and places for the celebration of Jashans or for offering prayers. For whereas some of these platforms are to be found in places remote from human habitation and far away from streams and cultivated lands, others are to be found in the close vicinity of streams and surrounded by trees and vegetation. These latter must evidently be the remains of platforms for offering sacrifices to Anāhitā (Avan Arduisur) and other yazatas. History bears witness to the fact that different places of worship were erected during the Achaemenian times in honour of different Yazads and Amshaspands—Anāhitā, Meher, Beheman, Amardad, etc. Two instances have been known in which such early platforms were used as ārām-gāhs and Jashan-Gāhs. In our own times the “ Chotras ” which are constructed whenever it is difficult to build costly ārām-gāhs for the disposal of the dead, remind us of the spacious platforms built under the Achaemenians according to the injunctions of the religion. A Jashan-Gāh seems to have survived in Div, one of the traditional places first settled in by the Parsis after they left Persia. In Div there is a platform of this kind carved out of a huge rock where the Zoroastrians of Div used to resort, away though it was from their own habitations, for the celebration of Gahambars and other Jashans, and these Gahambars and Jashans were known as Gahambars and Jashans of the rock (that is, those celebrated on the rock-cut platform). These two instances remind us of the uses of these platforms in ancient Iran, and bear witness amongst other things to the fact that these platforms must have been intended to be ārām-gāhs.

Are our present Aram-gāhs built according to the injunctions of the religion, and if any changes and improvements have occurred in them, what is the nature of these changes, and when were they brought about? Comparing the ārām-gāhs of our own times with the requirements laid down in the religion, one main difference we find is that these structures are not all to be built on hills or rocks,

Our Present Aram-gāhs—The changes introduced in them.

that they are not to be surrounded by walls, and that there is no injunction to provide in them for a well, intended to be a store-house. These changes that have occurred have been due to the lapse of time and changes in the environment. They are relatively few; and for the rest our present *āram-gāhs* are built with a view to conforming to the requirements of religion. Where no hills or rocks are to be found, the only thing that could be done is to set up a raised platform and to surround it with a wall. A two-fold purpose is served by the walls which surround our present *āram-gāhs*, *viz.*, such walls cover from our gaze the sight of the vultures devouring the body and prevent the birds from removing beyond the walls the bones or the remnants of the flesh. Instead of the *astodāns* required in the Vendidad for storing the bones after the flesh is removed, we have in our present *āram-gāhs* a store-house dug in the ground. This arrangement prevents the putrid matter of the bones from coming into contact with habited ground or water and vegetation, and permits of the bones being reduced to ashes with time. Of the four requirements laid down in the religion for the disposal of the dead all except one are carried out in our present *āram-gāhs*. We have a structure built of stones or bricks and mortar, the bodies are placed naked stripped of all covering, and flesh-eating birds can observe the bodies as soon as they are deposited in the *āram-gāh*. Thus the changes, if any, which have occurred in our *āram-gāhs* are in conformity with the spirit of the religion; they have been introduced with foresight so as to carry into practice to a large extent the principles of sanitation underlying the original injunctions. These changes were not introduced by the Parsis after their advent into India; they can be traced back to the Sassanide rule in Persia, for many of the ruins which exist in Persia to-day resemble closely in their structure our present *āram-gāhs*. These ruins were known as the *Dakhmas* of *Ardeshir Babakan*, *Behram*,

Behramgor Kobad. Perhaps these changes in structure may have been the result of the reforms introduced into the religion by the famous reformer Ardeshir Babakan.

I cannot help making a few observations at this stage in connection with our *ārām-gāhs*. These structures though they conform to the spirit of the religion have now become exceedingly costly to build and therefore a burden on the community. The poorer classes, with the result that wherever no *ārām-gāhs* exist dead bodies are buried under the earth in spite of all these specific injunctions of religion. This involves a subversion of the spirit of the religion, and is opposed to the original purpose of preserving the health of the people. This result is only due to the increase in cost of a structure which was originally intended to be simple and adapted to the needs of all classes. There has been a direct neglect of the clear injunction to build an *ārām-gāh* which would be suited alike to the needs of the rich as well as the poor, when in later times such structures have been built in a way which involves heavy expenditure. Where only a few hundred rupees were required thousands are now being spent, with the natural consequence that in a number of cases bodies have to be buried underground. It is desirable that the community should think seriously on this question which does not involve any further demand on the communal purse. Wherever a few Zoroastrians are to be found and where flesh-eating animals can be made available, it has been a practice to construct "chotras" for the disposal of the dead in the absence of costly *ārām-gāhs*, and this practice is in conformity with the spirit of the religion. We have heard of many such "chotras" existing in several parts of India, e.g., in Bhopal, where the "chotra" is used by the Zoroastrian residents, and in Bombay, where it is to be found side by side with the *ārām-gāhs*. Such platforms seem to have existed in the Achaemenian period. Thus wherever costly structures cannot be

An appeal to the leaders of the community.

built, it is our duty to set up "chotras", which are less costly, for the disposal of the dead. No religion will ever lay down injunctions which could only be carried out by the relatively rich, and which would be a burden on the poor to their disappointment. There is no reference to any costly plan in the Zoroastrian Religion for the disposal of the dead. Under the prosperous Sassanian rule in the past it may have been possible to spend lavishly on the building of arām-gāhs. Even in the present there exists a wealthy class in the community with religious faith in them; and it is a pity that in spite of this in a number of cases dead bodies have got to be buried. Yet it is not their fault that such a practice should have come into existence; the responsibility, if any, rests upon the leaders and religious guides of the community. The Zoroastrians living in a particular part can do without a Daremeher, ādrān, or an Atesh-Behram, for the railway and the telegraph have linked distant places close together in our times, but an arām-gāh is indispensable anywhere. There is a clear injunction in the religion to provide for one in every place where Zoroastrians reside, and in the absence of one people have been compelled to resort to dangerous methods of disposal.

We might here point to another instance connected with our costly Atesh-Behrams and the ceremonies associated with their foundation. The Dasturs who wrote the Revayats evidently desired to emphasise the religious importance of the "Kibla." But when they converted this "Kibla" into a matter of necessity everywhere it gave cause for disappointment to the poorer classes. The Dasturs have categorically announced that an Atesh-Behram is necessary wherever Behedins reside; for on the morning of the fourth day after the death of a Behedin an animal ought to be sacrificed and the fat of the animal dedicated to the fire in memory of the deceased. If this sacrifice of the fat is not offered to the Atesh-Behram all ceremonials would prove ineffective, and the welfare of the soul of the deceased

would not be secured. Further, every four months the fire of the household is to be taken to the Atesh-Behrām. It would be impiety not to do so. Thus in later times the "Kibla" has been made a costly affair, and the difficulties of the poor have been further increased by the dogmas of the Revayats. These dogmas have no foundation in the religion or in truth. The Zoroastrian religion does not make the welfare of the soul depend upon the fat of a sacrificed animal. The soul's welfare depends entirely upon the good or evil deeds of the deceased during his life-time. These unnecessary pronouncements of the Revayat have with the lapse of time met their natural fate.

The *ārām-gāhs* have intimate association with the religion and it is not desirable to tamper with the injunctions laid down with regard to them. We find, however, these injunctions sometimes tampered with, as for example, in connection with the trellis-work made on certain *ārām-gāhs* in Bombay. In the case of such *ārām-gāhs* the religious injunction that the body should be disposed of by flesh-eating animals cannot be carried out. This injunction is founded on sanitary principles and no substantial reason has been alleged for neglecting it. In the absence of such reasons we may well ask if it was only the pride of the rich that made them resort to this plan. Did the learned Dasturs of the times connive at this innovation, which is harmful and opposed to the spirit and specific requirements of the Religion ? We raise this question without meaning any offence to the people who have introduced this change through a desire to honour the dead.

Our early Aryan ancestors were familiar with three methods of disposal of the dead, viz : , burial, burning, and committal of the body to the waters. When Zoroaster and his disciples preached their reform of the old Aryan Religion they denounced all these three methods of disposal of the dead, and devised the new method of exposure to the sun. The Aryans who accepted this and other reforms were the ancestors

The Disposal of the Dead.

of the Parsis. Those who refused to accept them were the ancestors of the Hindus. Thus the early Aryans were divided into two branches. The first of these remained in their original home Iranvej under the protection of the rulers of the country. The other branch left their early home and took refuge in Aryavrut, where they still adhere to their early methods of burial, burning, or committal of the body to water. All these three methods have been declared harmful by the Zoroastrian religion. This religion regards air, fire, water, and the earth as sacred and pure elements and numerous injunctions are to be found for keeping these elements in their original pure condition free from contact with filth and impurity, for the welfare of humanity. These elements must be kept pure for they are instruments for increasing the happiness of mankind and even of all animate nature.

There is a strict injunction against carelessly throwing a dead body on the ground, secondly, against burying a body and Burial. putting up a stone or brick and mortar structure over it, thirdly, against building a structure underground (Dakhma) for the disposal of the dead. The reason is that all living things are harmed by the burial of a dead body, and the truth of the allegorical description given in the Vendidad is borne out by modern science. The question is raised in the seventh Fargard of the Vendidad "what is it that favours the growth of the Devs (diseases)?" And the answer is given: "it is these Dakhmas (underground cellars) built underground in which dead bodies are deposited. There are to be found the Devs, and those who sacrifice to the Devs. There it is that the Devs run about, meet together, and make merry in large numbers" (VII, 56). "Just as men prepare delightful food and relish it, so the Devs feast in the Dakhmas and make a festival" (VII, 57). "So long as the stench lasts the Devs rejoice. In these Dakhmas originate filth, disease, fever, poisonous gases, ague, tremors, and various other maladies" (VII, 58).

Underlying this allegorical description of the Vendidad is the truth that in spite of all the precautions that may be taken the burial of a dead body gives rise to putrefaction, to all kinds of disease carrying bacteria under the surface of the earth, which when they fatten and grow, infect the air and spread their poison on all sides. This is the cause for the spread of typhoid, typhus, and other diseases.

Thus in London, for instance, about a century and a quarter ago the cemetaries were overcrowded and encroached upon extensive and valuable ground. With the growth of the population of the city these cemetaries for the dead became a source of danger to the health and comfort of the living with the result that they were shifted beyond the city to a distant place. It is well-known that only a fourth part of a man's body consists of dead and solid matter, the remaining three-fourths consist of liquid substances. When bodies are buried underground they begin to putrefy, and the liquids flowing from them infect the waters of wells and underground springs giving rise to bacilli of various diseases. The analysis of samples of waters taken from wells in London on one occasion showed that there were a hundred and twenty-five grains of putrid matter in every gallon of water. A well-known writer observed after this announcement that every generation in London drinks the filth of the bodies of the generation that has preceded it. The revelation of these facts led to the closure of all wells in the city and to the use of pipewater drawn from a distance.

Some of the advocates of burial seem to believe that if a dead body is set in an isolated place it does not begin immediately to putrefy. Possibly the putrefaction may not commence till a year has elapsed according to these. Those who say so seem to be entirely ignorant of the laws of nature. The process of putrefaction in a body commences immediately after the heart has stopped and life has departed. In some

cases through the presence of specific diseases the body begins to putrefy even before life has departed. In other cases some time before and some time after life has departed the infection of the disease is exceedingly fatal to all living persons in the vicinity. This consideration evidently inspired the precautions laid down by custom in connection with the 'nasasalars' who come into direct contact with the dead body. No words of living men can ever alter the laws of nature or prevent putrefaction from taking place in a dead body. No skill or art on the part of man can preserve the body from corruption. There is undoubtedly a reference in the Vendidad (V, 10-14) to keeping a dead body apart for a certain time. But this has no resemblance to the present custom prevailing amongst other communities. The process of putrefaction is largely determined by climatic conditions. In warm countries it commences earlier and assumes more alarming proportions. In cold countries it commences later and is less harmful. In some cases severe cold may bring about the rapid destruction of poisonous bacilli. Thus the reference in the Vendidad to the injunction to set apart a dead body for some time must be taken in connection with the fact that it applied to a country like Iranvej situated to the north, a land of snow, where the winter was prolonged and extended from five to ten months in the year. Such an injunction could not be applied to a country like India. Secondly, the injunction in the Vendidad contemplates a calamity of nature like a severe winter which does not exist amongst us. Thirdly, the circumstances contemplated in the Vendidad are such as prevent in severe weather all out-door movements and keep people confined to their own homes. Fourthly, the limits laid down in the Vendidad are definite and extend from a day to a month; whereas no such specific limits are thought of in our own times. Thus in a country like India there is no need for conforming to this practice, and those who adopt it contravene the principles of sanitation.

According to the Vendidad the practice of burial is connected with a place called "Harkhaiti." Perhaps the practice of burial may

have first originated in this place, and other communities may have adopted it from the people of this place (Vendidad I, 13). This place is Erakosia of the Greeks, which is situated to the south-east of Kabul near Kandahar.

The body thrown into water speedily begins to putrefy. The disease germs spread out in all directions, and the stench which arises is exceedingly harmful. The dead bodies thrown into the water infect the air and waters and give rise to plagues and pestilences. Water is invaluable for all living beings as the source of life itself, and when infected water is used for the purposes of drinking and washing, it becomes a potent instrument for the spread of fatal diseases. Pious Hindus very frequently confide their dead bodies to the sacred waters of the Ganges. To prevent them from floating on the surface of the waters these bodies are sunk with heavy stones attached to them. The waters of the Ganges are regarded as sacred, and it is considered a pious duty amongst Hindus to drink and bathe in them. Moreover, the Bengalis use the species of fatty fish which lives upon the flesh of human bodies; and it has been conjectured that this practice of committing dead bodies to the waters has resulted in cholera which has taken millions of lives in India. A commission appointed by the French Government to inquire into the origin of cholera consisting of well-known European physicians after careful inquiries at Constantinople and in different parts of India published a report in which they traced the birth of this disease to the waters of the Ganges. The Zoroastrian Religion has regarded the act of committing a dead body to the waters as exceedingly harmful, and there is an injunction on every Zoroastrian when he sees a dead body floating on the waters to take it out even at the risk of his life and to expose it on dry ground (Vendidad VI, 26-29). We may be pardoned if we say that if the Zoroastrian Religion which has so clearly indicated the dangers of burial and other harmful disposal of the dead had spread throughout the world, and if its injunctions

had been extensively practised the world would have been spared the ravages of many a fatal disease, and likewise the expenditure of money and energy in fighting against them.

The process of burning a dead body over a pile of wood infects the air with stench and filth. Very often the flesh and the bones are not entirely reduced to ashes in the absence of ample fuel, with terrible sights for the observers around. Scholars have told us that as a matter of history the earliest method of disposing of the dead bodies was burning, and that it was followed by burial and the method of committal of the body to waters. Psychologists tell us that men are not always far-sighted. That a great many never pause to consider the ultimate consequence of their acts, and do things which cause the least effort. When obstacles arise men naturally turn their attention to alternative methods. Thus when the means for burning dead bodies are not easily available the poorer classes naturally resort to burial and to the still more dangerous, though apparently the easier and more convenient practice of committing the body to the waters. Admitting that burning is infinitely better than burial or committal to waters it is not adapted to the spirit of our Religion. (Vendidad I, 17). The question may now be asked what is the method of disposing of dead bodies, which will best conform to the teachings of science and the injunctions of our religion? It would appear that the only method that answers to the requirement is that of exposure to the sun which has been recommended in the Vendidad with considerable scientific insight and on sound sanitary principles. There is a reference in the Vendidad to a place called "chakhra" in connection with the practice of burning a dead body. We must conjecture that the practice must have started from this place (I, 17). Scholars have endeavoured to connect this Chakhra with the city of Chakhra in Khorassan.

It remains to ask if there are any serious dangers to health in the method of disposing of dead bodies which prevails **Exposure to the Sun**, amongst Parsis. How far is this method superior to other methods of disposing of dead bodies from a scientific point of view? The motive that underlies the Zoroastrian method is the desire to preserve the elements of nature from all impurities, and thus to affect general health to the smallest extent possible. With this in view the method aims at the most rapid possible disposal of the flesh, and recommends exposure to the sun. The dead body is exposed to the full light of the Sun, and also to the influence of the winds. It calls nature to help in the work of disposing of the dead bodies. There is no time allowed to the flesh to putrefy. Before the flesh can putrefy it is devoured by nature's flesh-eating animals. The bones that are left over rapidly dry up under the rays of the sun. Any poisonous bacilli associated with the dead body are scattered in the vast atmosphere preventing the spread of disease by infection. Scientists tell us that all germs and bacilli which arise through putrefaction are deprived of their poison by the light and warmth of the sun, and all poison is rapidly destroyed. In the Vendidad the bacteria of various diseases are allegorically referred to as Devs and Drujes. The disease-producing germs are referred to as "Drujanasus." These are the microbes and bacilli of our present day sciences. As the Religion enjoins dead bodies to be exposed on lofty hills and rocks the germs of infectious diseases are spread in the upper air, and the infection never reaches the earth. History tells us that the Achaemenian Parsis built spacious platforms in stones thirty to sixty feet high from the ground which served as *āram-gâhs*. After the wild animals had disposed of the flesh the bones were placed in *Astodâns* built at the same height where they were reduced to ashes. In the process of chemical changes that take place in the dead body the bacilli of disease lose their venom. Thus nature is made to play a large part in the work of disposal of dead bodies. It may almost be said that nature

devises her own plans in the work of final disposal of dead bodies, with the result that wherever the laws of nature are not observed in the disposal of bodies, nature revenges herself by the destruction that it spreads.

Thus there appear to be no such dangers as are sometimes ascribed to the Parsi method of disposal. It has been proved to be superior to other methods, and no one has been able to show that there is a breach of sanitary principles in the wise injunctions of the Religion in this method.

Unfounded attacks have often been made sometimes through malice and sometimes through ignorance. This has ~~Cowardly attacks on~~ especially occurred in connection with the arām-gāhs Aram-Gahs.

in the city of Bombay, which have been unfairly described as "the abode of pestilences" These towers are built on sanitary principles, and they are not likely to be affected by any such unfounded attacks Those who consider the arām-gāhs as instruments for spreading disease might well realise the dangers of their own cemetaries. They might ask themselves whether these cemetaries are not the means for spreading abroad the poisonous bacilli of diseases. They will then be forced to admit the groundlessness of their attack on Parsi arām-gāhs. Medical science has already pointed out that the cemetaries are the causes of all sorts of fevers and other pestilences, so that in civilised countries cemetaries are always built beyond the limits of thickly populated quarters. To bury bodies in the vicinity of populated quarters is to invite fatal diseases. To build memorial-stones in grave yards may be a means of expressing our reverence for the dead and cherishing their memory. But it is not a means of conforming to sanitary principles. The main idea underlying the Zoroastrian method is to prevent a dead body from doing harm to the living world. The

Zoroastrian Religion lays special emphasis on the health and welfare of the living in its injunctions with regard to the disposal of dead bodies. More importance is attached to the Farohar, the spiritual power that guides the soul, than to the perishable body. The dead are not to be reverenced at the cost of the living. Zoroaster and his disciples were familiar with the serious consequences resulting from the different methods of the disposing of the dead, and have kept in view the injunction of the welfare of the living. The Zoroastrian Religion has served not only the Parsi community but the whole of the living world by its teachings on this question.

THE PARSI "DAKHMA."

Important questions are associated with the word "Dakhma". Many scholars have already carried on detailed investigations into these questions, and the present writer has had his share in such investigations towards these earlier efforts at a solution of these questions.

The last resting-place of the Parsis is generally referred to as the "Dakhma" which is not a very appropriate name. What is more, there is no good reason so far as our religion is concerned in calling it by this name. The structure associated with this name does not conform strictly with the injunctions of our religion. In the Vendidad the words "Dakhma Uzadaea" or "Dakhma" are employed for structures underground which are built in on all sides. There is an injunction in this connection on the followers of the prophet to demolish and destroy such structures (See Vendidad VII, 49 and 52). Later writings throw light on these words and confirm our interpretation of the Vendidad passages in which they appear. In Pahlavi we come across the words "dakhmak" and "ajān", and in Persian the words "dakhma" and "dakhmeh". In the Pahlavi commentary we are told "ajān" or "dakhmak" means a place underground to which the rays of the sun cannot penetrate, and which is not open to the sky (Vendidad III, 30). And according to the Persian Farhangh "dakhma is an underground cellar in which corpses are deposited." "Dakhma" or "dakhmeh", is a cellar for holding corpses. "The word is ordinarily applied to a coffin, and especially to the graves of the Guebres (Zoroastrians)." Thus in the light of all these Avestan, and Persian references it would appear that "Dakhma" is not an appropriate name for the final resting-place of the Parsis, and the word "Dakhma" originally indicated "a cellar underground built round on all sides."

1. This meaning was first indicated to us by the late Ervad Sheriarji Bharucha "Zartosh-ti Athyas." No. V. pp : 260-73.

We have already seen from the references given elsewhere that the name "Dakhma" originally given to a closed cellar intended for corpses was subsequently given to a structure built for depositing things of various kinds. Mirkhond and Kazvini, two Persian historians, have told us that King Gushtasp had ordered books pertaining to the religion to be placed in the Dakhmeh. Though there has evidently been some misunderstanding about this statement of fact, the statement is worth noticing for various reasons. The cellar intended for corpses was familiar under the name of "Dakhma," and in the Avesta "Dakhma" is qualified by the adjective "uzadaea". From this adjective is derived the Persian "Dez", which means "a fort." Now according to Pahlavi writings the Kianian Gushtasp and other Kings had made a collection of writings bearing on religion and history, and had got this collection placed in structures resembling a fort. We come across two such structures—(1) Ganjeshaspigan, and (2) Deze napisht, and the second of these two words connotes a fortress of writings or works. Thus from a confusion between the adjective "Uzadaea" which was applied to "Dakhma" and the Persian derivatives "Dez" and "Deze-napisht", which were used for a royal library containing works on the Zoroastrian Religion, the Persian writers of an alien race began to call this library, "a Dakhmeh." The original meaning of the word "Dakhma," *viz.*, a closed cellar, is thus confirmed by the misapplication of the word to a fortified structure intended for the preservation of historic and other writings.

According to Mirkhond and Kazvini this famous library was organised by King Gushtasp. They tell us that when Gushtasp came to Istakhar he ordered a "Dakhmeh" to be built, and that the entire collection of the Zend Avesta be immediately deposited therein. Different writers give us somewhat discrepant accounts about the collection of writings in this ancient library. According to Pliny there were two million stanzas in this collection of the Zend Avesta. Dastur Tansar and the author of the Arda-Viraf Nameh describe these writings as being written on parchment in gold letters. Dastur Tansar

and Mirkhond state these writings were embodied in 12,000 parchments. According to the Shatiroihae Iran, a Pahlavi work, there were 1,200 Fargards in this Avesta. The author of this last mentioned work tells us that this Avesta was written by order of the prophet Zoroaster, and that it included the history of seven famous Kings from Gayomard to Gushtasp. This "Deze-napisht" library was destroyed by the Greek King Alexander. The other library known as "Ganje-shaspigan" was attached to an Atesh Behram (Fire-temple) at Samarkand, and was preserved as a treasure for long.

Were the dead bodies of our forefathers deposited in Dakhmas, and

The "Dakhma" of the Peshdadian and Kianian Heroes. if so, were these Dakhmas the same as the Dakhmas of our own times? We have reference in Parsi History to these early structures known as

"Dakhmas". Kings and heroes like Faredoon, Kaikobad, and Kaikaus (and Afrasyab) were deposited in Dakhmas. Some of these bodies were enclosed in coffins and placed in a Dakhma underground. Others were placed on a pedestal (gahan), and others were embalmed (Shah-nameh). From the first of these references it would appear that a Dakhma is a kind of coffin intended to contain a dead body. All these references to disposal in a Dakhma are pre-Zoroastrian, and it is considered far from improper that dead bodies should be buried underground. After the religion of Zoroaster was introduced and spread we are told of the burial underground of the bodies of Rustom, Sorab, Zavare, and Dara-e-Darab (Shah-nameh). And we can account for the disposal of their bodies in this manner. It appears from history that when the Zoroastrian Religion received the protection of the Kyanian King Gushtasp in Iranvej, and the religion was accepted by the royal family as well as by the Iranian people, the Jabulis were never reconciled to the new Religion. There is no evidence in history or in religious books of their having accepted the new religion. We do not find in the Avesta any mention of Rustom, Sorab, and other Jabuli heroes, and the Farvardin Yesht does not include their names nor

recall their fame whilst enumerating other famous heroes of the past. After the establishment of the Zoroastrian Religion King Arjasp of Khyeon appears to have been its greatest enemy, and on three successive occasions he appears to have undertaken attacks against and to have waged sanguinary wars on Iranvej in order to suppress the spreading Zoroastrian faith. In these wars the members of the royal family as well as the people of Iran had to offer heavy sacrifices for the sake of their religion. In these critical times we do not find the loyal, patriotic, valiant Jabulis, usually so ready to follow the Iranian Kings, taking any part on behalf of their country or their religion. We find the Iranian King after his victory in the first of these religious wars going to Jabulistan as the guest of Jal, and endeavouring to expound to the Jabulis the virtues of the new religion and to win them over to his side. But these efforts were not fruitful for taking advantage of the absence of the King and of the imprisonment of Aspandiar, the enemy undertook another expedition against Iran, in which Zarathushtra, and the aged Lohorasp, the father of the Iranian monarch, were killed; the princesses, Homai and Beheafid, were deprived of their possessions, and the famous Fire-Temple of Azarenush founded by a descendant of Gushtasp was destroyed. When the news of these events reached the Iranian monarch he hurried back to his country. In these terrible times, though the help of the valiant men of Sistan would have been exceedingly opportune the Jabulis remained indifferent and stirred not a finger in defence of their country and their religion. It is thus clear that the Jabuli Jal, his valiant son, and his famous descendants never took to the new religion, still less did they adopt it. It is not unnatural that their dead bodies were not exposed to the Sun in accordance with the spirit of the Zoroastrian Religion, but that they were buried underground in coffins according to the custom of the royal family. Another instance of a dead body being buried after the spread of the new religion is that of the unfortunate Dara-e-Darab, the last of the Achaemenian Kings. We can easily account

for the truth of this fact when we remember that Dārā's body was disposed of under instructions from a great personality belonging to another race. We shall see later on that the Achaemenian rulers carried out the injunctions of the Zoroastrian religion in the matter of disposing of dead bodies. They used to expose dead bodies to wild animals in accordance with the spirit of the religion, and to deposit the bones in structures known as Astodāns. If, nevertheless,* we are told of the burial of the dead body of a King, the reason is that when Dārā was defeated by Alexander and fled, he was pursued and killed by a Macedonian officer, who handed the body to Alexander. The latter caused it forthwith to be buried. Thus it was at the hands of an alien ruler and not of Parsis that the body of Dārā was buried underground in a Dakhma after being sprinkled over with incense (Shali-nameh). Thus all this evidence based on Avesta, the Pahlavi Commentaries, the Persian Farhangs, and Parsi history indicates that the original Dakhma was a cellar built all round, and that the door leading to it was a kind of covering to it.

Now this Dakhma is not to be mistaken for the Dakhmas of our own time, as their structure and their respective methods of disposing of dead bodies are entirely different from one another. In our present Dakhmas we have arrangements for exposing all dead bodies on one and the same place side by side, whereas in the old Dakhmas, as in the Christian and Mohamedan cemetaries of today, each individual had his own grave separate from those of the rest. Thus Faredoon, Kaikaus, Dārā had each his own Dakhma. In those early days it was not merely the Iranians, but also the Egyptians, and other primitive races who were familiar with this custom of burying dead bodies underground, and gave to it different names. As now, so in those days various methods of burial underground prevailed, and amongst these that of constructing cellars was considered the best and the most noticeable. The bodies of members of the royal family and of the nobility were placed in cellars built by the best artists with an eye to beauty. Popular as this method was in the earlier days, it was

pronounced by the Zoroastrian religion to be destructive of the principles of sanitation, to be harmful to general health, and therefore the least valuable of all the methods of disposal.

From internal evidences to be found in the Avesta it would appear that the Dakhma described in the Vendidad is not our present Dakhma. In the seventh Fargardad of the Vendidad three methods of disposing of dead bodies are referred to, adapted to different social conditions.

Is the Dakhma, described in the Vendidad, our present Dakhma?

The great majority of the poorer classes used to expose their dead bodies to the sun. Men with moderate means used to dig underground, and covered over the body with earth or sometimes with a structure like a grave. The nobility built underground structures known as "Dakhmas" for the disposal of their bodies. We also find in the Vendidad references to the harmful consequences of such methods of disposal. It is harmful to leave a dead body on the surface of the earth exposed to the sun without care. It is still more harmful to bury a body underground and to build a structure over it. It is most harmful of all to build a Dakhma, or a structure built all round underground. We arrive at this order of harmfulness from the length of time necessary in different cases to purify ground rendered impure by contact with the dead. Thus, for example, it required a year to purify ground on which a dead body has been carelessly thrown. (VII. 45-46.) It requires fifty years to purify ground under which a body is buried. (VII. 47-48.) and as for ground under which a Dakhma is built it can only be purified when the dead body is completely reduced to dust (VII. 49-50). Now if the Dakhma described in the Vendidad is the same as our present Dakhma, we ought not to find a preference given to simple burial under the ground, and to throwing a dead body carelessly on the surface of the earth as is actually the case in the Vendidad. Further, if the Dakhma of the Vendidad is the same as our modern Dakhma our present method of disposing of the dead ought to be considered superior to the other two methods of casting a dead

body carelessly on the ground or of burying it underground. But this is not the case, and we shall have occasion to examine later on the reasons for this anomaly.

Secondly, corresponding to the different methods of disposing of dead bodies we find in the Vendidad different forms of words derived from different roots. In the seventh Fargard we find the verb "frabar" (25) used both for throwing a body into water and into fire. the verb "ni-kant" (47) for burying a body underground, and for burying and building a structure over the body. We find the expression "ni-dha" (45) for leaving a dead body on the ground in contravention of the spirit of the religion, and the same expression is used (49) for depositing a body in a Dakhma, that is, a cellar underground built all round. On the other hand we find the verb "ni-dath" (VI, 44, 49,) used for exposing a body to the rays of the sun according to the injunction of the religion, and for placing the bones in an Astodān after the flesh has been removed. If the Dakhma of the Vendidad were the same as our present Dakhma we would not have two verbal forms for the same. As on the other hand "ni-dha" is used for a Dakhma opposed to the injunctions of the religion, and " ni-dath " for exposure to the sun in conformity with those injunctions. We can only account for the difference in these two forms by assuming that they refer to two different methods of disposing of the dead. We may well believe therefore that the Dakhma o' the Vendidad is not our present Dakhma with its mode of exposing bodies to the rays of the sun.

Thirdly, we find two expressions in the Vendidad, viz., " Dakhma uzadæza " and " Dakhma " used for the cellars built underground. "Uzadæza" is an adjective applied to "Dakhma". We find a reference to " Dakhma uzadæza " in three places in the Vendidad, whereas " Dakhma " is to be found in seven or more places. Are these two expressions used in different senses, or on the other hand do they both have the same meaning ? If we look to the effects of these two modes of disposing of the dead as found in the Vendidad we are told that

the earth is displeased when a body is placed in a "Dakhma uzadaeza" (III, 9), secondly, that the earth rejoices when the "Dakhma uzadaeza" is destroyed (III, 13), and thirdly, that Devs and Drujes (diseases and maladies) multiply when a body is placed in a Dakhma uzadaeza (VII, 55-56). We find further that there is a direct reference to two of these effects following from placing a body in the "Dakhma-uzadaeza" as also following from placing a body in a Dakhma, and indirectly the third effect may be construed as following in reference to the Dakhma from the first two. Vendidad VII. 49-52, contains an injunction to destroy Dakhma; Vendidad VIII, 57-58, tells us that to place a body in a Dakhma is to offer food to the Devs and Drujes (maladies and diseases), and to multiply all kinds of fevers and maladies. The destruction of a Dakhma naturally causes the earth to rejoice. Thus the expression "Dakhma uzadaeza" and "Dakhma" are not employed in two different senses. Both have the same harmful consequences. It follows that wherever these expressions are employed in the Vendidad they must not be confounded with our present Dakhmas, and that it is not proper to use the word "Dakhma" in connection with the places which we use today for the exposure of our dead.

Fourthly, in the passages in the Vendidad where there is an injunction to destroy the Dakhmas we find a description of the size of the Dakhma, and this size is stated to be not larger than would contain a single dead body. Vendidad VIII. 51, asks us to destroy the Dakhma which is made to fit the body of a dead man. If the Dakhma of the Vendidad were the same as our Dakhma the size of the latter ought to be proportioned to the size of a single dead body. But whilst the Dakhma of the Vendidad is five or six feet long, and two to three feet wide, our present Dakhmas are fifty to seventy-five feet long as well as broad. Thus it is evident that the Dakhma of the Vendidad is not our present Dakhma, but that it was a cellar underground intended to contain a single body like the tombs and graves of other communities.

We find in the eighth Fargard of the Vendidad the following question with regard to the disposal of a dead body-
 Vendidad, Fargard VIII. "What are Mazdyasnians to do, when they find the dead body of a dog or of a man lying under the shade of a tree or on ground which is covered with grass?" And the answer is given, "Ohrmazd replied, that they should find out a Dakhma, or prepare, or build a Dakhma" (VIII, 1-2).

This passage of the Vendidad requires elucidation. On the one hand we are asked in the Vendidad to break up and destroy Dakhmas, we are forbidden from building Dakhmas, we are told of the harmful consequences following from such structures, and their destruction is considered an act of piety (VII. 51-52). And yet on the other hand we are now asked to build a Dakhma. It is true that in this passage (VIII, 1-2) we are asked to find out or to build a Dakhma. It must be remembered, however, that as at present, so also in early days the place where dead bodies of Parsis were to be disposed was ready for use and people had not to go in search of it or to build one every time a man died. The question accordingly arises what can be the nature of the Dakhma referred to in this passage? It is evident that in this passage when a man dies under special circumstances men are asked to find or to build a Dakhma, which cannot be a place for the final disposal of the body, but for its temporary disposal. Vendidad VIII. 4, clearly refers to a Dakhma for such temporary disposal. Further if the question referred to the final disposal of the dead why should there be a reference to the shade of a tree or to the ground covered with grass? In that case the only words which might have been properly employed in the Vendidad would have been: "what should we do if a man dies? Where should we take the dead body? Where should we deposit it?" For the final disposal of bodies it would not matter under what circumstances the death occurred, whether under the shade of a tree or out in the open, whether on ground covered with grass or on barren soil. These circumstances

would make no difference to the dead body, and would not be sufficient reason for looking out for a Dakhma. Vendidad VIII. 1-3, is a passage difficult to interpret, and we do not know of any Avesta scholars who has endeavoured to throw light on this passage.

When we are asked in Vendidad VIII. 1-2, to find or prepare a

Dakhma, the question refers to special circumstances
 Dakhma as a temporary place for the disposal of a body and the intention seems to be not to secure the final disposal of the body, but to adopt measures of a temporary character between the moment of death and the time when the body could be finally disposed of. This is clear if we refer to the passage in the eighth Fargard which follows:

“What are Mazdyasnians to do if, when a man or a dog dies in a Mazdyasnian house, it is raining, or if the weather is foggy and dark in day-time, or if cattle are prevented from following their own track (or if the enemy is laying siege to the place) or if there is interruption in the normal work of men, (or if all trade and business have come to a dead stop on account of some disaster.)?” (VIII. 4).

This passage refers to some natural disaster. It has nothing in common with VIII. 1-3, but it throws indirect light on the interpretation of the latter passage. In the answer to this question of VIII. 4, Vendidad VIII. 5-7, asks us to select a place in the house clean and dry, away from human habitat, and also at a distance from where ceremonial instruments are kept. We are next told “in the place thus selected Mazdyasnians should dig if the soil is hard upto the depth of half the human foot, and if the soil is soft upto the depth of half a man ; that in the hole thus dug out Mazdyasnians should throw ashes or gravel, and over the ashes or gravel should deposit stones or lay out bricks, or pour dry dust.” (VIII. 8). There follows an injunction to deposit the dead body in the place thus prepared during the

period of a day to a month, or during such period as the calamity lasts. This separate place thus prepared is referred to as a Dakhma, that is, a temporary structure for the disposal of the dead during the period of a calamity. It should be noticed that in the answer to the first question in this Fargard there is no specific mention of the Dakhma.

We find another reference to the temporary disposal of the dead

Kat—temporary place for the dead. A boundary line.

during the severities of the winter in the fifth Fargard of the Vendidad. Vendidad V. 10, enjoins the reservation of a separate place for the temporary disposal of the dead in every house and street. This place is

called "Kat", which means "a place or a room dug out underground." Vendidad V. II, tells us that this

place should be just large enough to contain a dead body, and that men should refrain from encroaching on more ground than is necessary for this purpose. The place thus laid out is called "dāityo-Kat," that is, a place adapted to a dead body. The body is to be kept in this place for a period ranging from a day to a month, or during such time as the calamity lasts. And when the calamity disappears we are enjoined to remove the dead body and to expose it to the Sun according to the commands of Religion. (VIII. 12-13).

Thus Vendidad, Fargards V, and VIII, are parallel passages which both provide for the temporary disposal of dead bodies during a period of calamity. This temporary structure or place is called "Kat" in the fifth Fargard and it is the same as the place referred to in the eighth Fargard. In Vendidad VIII. 4-8, we have a description of this place though there is no special name given to it. The reason is that it has already been called in VIII.2, by the name of "Dakhma". This name "Dakhma" is thus applied to a space dug underground in the house itself where a dead body could be deposited, care being taken that it is not covered with dust or any other kind of covering.

This interpretation of "Dakhma" as a cave or cavity for placing a dead body is confirmed by a reference to the fifth

Dakhma, the
womb of a moth-
er giving birth
to a still-born
child.

Fargard of the Vendidad. Vendidad V. 51, gives the name "Dakhma" to the womb of a woman who gives birth to a still-born child. Evidently the womb of such a woman is regarded as impure, and there is an injunction to purify it by a kind of solution of ashes and gomez.

The place in the mother's body which temporarily contains a dead child is regarded as the Dakhma of that child. Thus if the womb of a woman is characterised as a "Dakhma" under these circumstances, a temporary place dug underground for the disposal of a dead body may with greater reason be called "a Dakhma".

We are now in a position to understand and throw light on the difficulties already referred to in the eighth Fargard

Conclusions. of the Vendidad. The Zoroastrian Religion regards as impure all dead bodies and the places where they are deposited, and amongst the methods of disposal of the dead the "Dakhma" has been regarded as the most impure. The isolated place in a house used temporarily during a period of calamity for a dead body is known as "Dakhma" and "Kat." The injunction which permits during a period of calamity a dead body to be placed in a place dug underground in the house itself, owing to the difficulties of an immediate disposal according to the spirit of the religion, is closely connected with the climatic conditions of Iranvez and its severe winter. The temporary place thus rendered impure by contact with a dead body, a place, be it remembered, which is not covered up or built all round, is called "Kat" or "Dakhma". Thus there are no contradictions in "the injunctions of the Vendidad with regard to the disposal of the dead. The "Dakhma" referred to in the 8th Fargard of the Vendidad is a temporary expedient, and must not be confounded with our present "Dakhmas," and we can well understand the spirit which inspired the injunction to break down and destroy all Dakhmas which were intended to be the final resting-places of the dead.

Before the advent of the Zoroastrian Religion the kings and the A Historical Per- gentry of the country prided themselves in building cellars underground for their dead bodies. This plexity.

practice was denounced in severe terms in the Vendidad and yet in the eighth Fargard of the Vendidad men were asked under certain circumstances to build a Dakhma. This was the origin of a confusion which developed with time, and from this time the final resting-place of the Parsis began to be known as a "Dakhma."

Secondly, although Pahlavi writers and the author of a Persian Farhang have clearly indicated the true meaning of the word "Dakhma," the famous Firdusi led away by the practice of the Peshdadyan and Kyanian heroes gave the name "Dakhma" to the final resting-places of our ancestors in the Sassanian times, and from his times the places which we use for the disposal of our dead have wrongly continued to be called "Dakhmas."

Thirdly, the root of the Avestan word "Dakhma" is not known, but we have the adjective applied to it, viz., "uzadaeza." Leaving aside the prefix "uza" the part that remains is "daeza," whose root "diza" (Sansk: "Diha") means "to build" or "to surround". From this root are derived the Pahlavi "Daza," or "Dazi" and Persian "Deza" which mean "a fort." It may be noticed that the Persian historians Mirkhond and Kazvini have called by the name of a "Dakhma" the royal library of Dezenapisht. Our present place for the disposal of the dead resembles a fort, and the Persian word for a fort, viz., "Deza," is a short form of "daeza," the adjective applied to "Dakhma." Thus we can understand the confusion which resulted in the application of the word "Dakhma" to the famous library of Dezenapisht.

We may now turn to the expression for the final resting-place.

Buland Gah. The place for the final disposal of dead bodies is known in the Vendidad as "barezishtgatu" (Vendidad VI. 45), from which are derived the Pahlavi "Balestagās" and Pazend Persian "Bulandtar Gāh," which mean "the highest place" (the most esteemed place). Thus the proper expression

for our final resting-place adapted to the spirit of our Religion is "Bulandtar-Gah" or its shorter form "Buland Gah." Thus when we have ready to hand an expression like "Buland Gah" for our final resting-place it is not desirable to continue using the word "Dakhma, a name associated with something that has been forbidden by our Religion.

Our "Buland Gah" is known as "bhastu" amongst other communities. What this last word stands for is not quite clear to those who use it. It is found employed in **Bhastu, t e Behet-
sht of the Parsis.** a good sense as well as in an opprobrious sense.

In common use a man is usually cursed with death by being asked to go to "Bhastu." On the other hand on more careful inquiry into its origin and meaning it appears to have been given to our final resting-places by the Mohamedans. I have come across Mohamedan works intended for the use of converts to Islam and written by their spiritual guides in Urdu and Gujarati in which the word "Bhastu" or "Bhast" is used in the same sense as "Behesht." Thus we find a mention of eight "Bhasts" describing to us the resting-places of allah, Rassool and angels of all kinds. Thus the word "Bhastu" can be traced to the Persian "Behest," and amongst alien communities the term "Behesht," with all its sacred association, has not unnaturally come to be applied to this structure which has been a silent witness to the principles of sanitation.

**The Ancient Parsi
Astodan.** The Zoroastrian Religion has specific injunctions about the disposal of the bones when the flesh is removed by wild animals. In the 6th Fargard of the Vendidad in answer to a question with regard to the disposal of the bones, we are asked to build an "uzadān" from which we have the Pahlavi "Astodān," (Avesta, "ast uzadān"). The word means "a lofty place or cave for depositing bones." We have the following description with regard to it.

"The Astodan should be built on an elevated spot which cannot be approached by dogs, foxes, wolves, and other wild animals, and it should have a covering which would prevent rain-water from falling

on the bones. It may be built of stone in the case of a rich man, or of thick canvas, in the case of a poor man, the bones can be wrapped up in useless sheets or carpets, and deposited apart so that the rays of the Sun may fall on such bundles. (VI, 49-51)."

Thus three precautions have to be taken in connection with the Astodan. (1). It must be built on an elevated spot, so that the bones may be beyond the reach of wild animals, and must be so built as to prevent rain-water from falling on the bones. (2) The building may be of stone or brick and mortar, or the bones may be simply wrapped up in a piece of cloth according to the means of different people. (3) It must be so constructed that the rays of the sun can reach the bones.

The description of the Astodān that we find in the Pahalvi Dadastan-i-Dini written by the learned Dastur Manuscheher agrees largely with the description given in the Vendidad. This work was written after the Sassanide rule had ended in Persia and we conclude that though people were familiar with this religious injunction to build Astodans, there were no such constructions in the Sassanide times. For this was the period in which improved Buland Gāhs, such as we are familiar with to-day, began to be constructed, and they contained an arrangement for the disposal of the bones.

There is thus no longer any necessity for building Astodāns according to the requirements of the Vendidad, and thus

Changes and Improvements in the old Astodans. a change has occurred in the method of disposal of the bones. This was first introduced under the Sassanides, and it was connected with the changes and improvements in the Buland-Gāhs. Though

the Vendidad enjoins two such sepatate structures as the Buland-Gāh and the astodan, when the Buland-Gāh was first introduced under the Sassanide Kings, the purpose of the Astodān was served by a well or a hole dug underground, in which the bones were deposited till they were reduced to ashes. Thus the place of the old Astodān is now taken by a well. By this arrangement the bones are protected against

wild animals, though it must be admitted that they are not protected against rain-water. The liquids flowing from the bones are made to pass through channels into wells dug deep underground, so as to prevent all possibility of the spread of pestilence. There is nothing surprising in this abandonment of one of the injunctions. Our ancestors in the past have often made improvements and changes in religious injunctions in response to changes in their surroundings and changes in time and place, and in some cases these injunctions have altogether been set aside.

The Astodans of Achaemenian Heroes. Under the rule of the Achaemenides elaborately built Astodāns were constructed in accordance with the dictates of the religion, and the labours of European travellers have brought to light many of them built on elevated spots with elaborate carvings in which were apparently deposited the bones of Achaemenian heroes. These early Astodans were not of a standard size. M. Neubeuhr gives us the measurement of three Astodāns, which were all nine feet long, eight feet broad, and four feet high. Two of them are built in the same style. Two of them bear inscriptions, and one is without inscription. From the inscriptions it appears that the two astodans were those of Kurush and Darius Hystaspes. From the reproductions of these two astodāns made by travellers it appears that the Astodān of Kurush is quite plain from the exterior, but is built in white marble inside and outside, and other astodāns appear to have been built on the same design. The latter was constructed by Darius during his own life time. The Kings, the descendants of the royal families, and the nobles had separate Astodāns, in which were deposited their own bones as well as those of their relatives. The bones of the subject-people were collected and deposited in a well or cave dug on the top of rocks. These Astodāns were usually built at an elevation of thirty to sixty feet from the ground and they were made unapproachable. No steps could be found making the rock on which they were built accessible; and the rocks

were sometimes artificially cut so as to make a steep and straight wall. The travellers who have approached these Astodāns with a view to have a sight of them, and to copy down the inscriptions, have done so at the risk of their lives. They were lifted up by means of ropes round their waists by the people living round about. The reason for making these Astodāns inaccessible can be easily understood. Firstly, the bones had to be protected from the wild four-footed flesh-eating animals. Secondly, they had also to be protected from rain-water. We also find the Astodāns covered up with huge stones with holes bored into them, with a view to allow the rays of the Sun to penetrate inside.

These Astodāns are situated near the capitals of Pasargard and Persipolis, and several of them on Mount Nakhsha Rustom in the South of the Murghab Valley. We further find huge jars sunk under ground full of bones in different parts of the country, known as "Khumbs." It is not possible to say with certainty that these bones belong to Parsis, but there is no doubt that the bones deposited in caves on the top of mountains, and covered with huge blocks of stones were the bones of the poorer classes, and that the caves were the Astodāns of these classes.

The Macedonian King Alexander, who brought about the downfall of the Achaemenians, anxious to see the Astodān of Kurush. the founder of the Achaemenian Empire, Kurush, on Mount Pasargard, found it intact. We have a description of it in Arrian. It was a stone structure of an elaborate character covered with a huge block with a narrow way leading to it. Inside was spread a carpet with a box made in gold on it, and also precious dresses and jewelry. There was also a throne with a golden base on which was placed the skeleton of Cyrus. Close to the Astodān was a room built for the use of a magi (mobed) who was keeping watch over the Astodān. On the Astodān was an inscription : "I am Kurush of the Achaemenian Dynasty." This Astodān

is now in ruins and all its precious contents have been removed as in the case of other Astodāns.

Though the Astodān of Darius Hystaspes has suffered at the hands of time and through human vandalism, we have fortunately preserved for us the beautiful carvings and Cuneiform inscriptions of the earlier days. This Astodān as well as those of other heroes are located on elevated spots near Persipolis, where also are to be found the ruins of the palatial buildings of Darius, Xerxes, and other Emperors.

The Astodān of Darius appears to be the only one built by a monarch in his own life-time. It is a witness to the eternal truth, that man should never be afraid of death, but should always stand prepared for it. To stand prepared for death without fear is possible only to him who has led a good and useful life, and who can stand before his pilot face to face when he has crossed the bar. The inscription on these Astodāns amongst other things calls upon men to have complete faith in Ahuramazda, the God of gods. Darius in this inscription attributes to Ahuramazda and to Him alone all the glory, all the fame of his successful career, and he dedicates all that he has to Ahuramazda alone. The first few lines of the inscription remind us of Yasna 37, on which it appears to be a sort of commentary. Being himself a lover of Truth and Righteousness, he appeals to all the nations under his protection to follow the same righteous path.

On the front of these famous Astodāns we have a splendid picture, the product of the labours of a great artist. Darab is seen standing on his throne, in front of a fire, under the open sky. The throne is lifted up by twenty-nine men who appear to be rebels or kings who had sustained defeat at the hands of the monarch. One hand of the king holds a bow, while the other hand is raised aloft to the sky. Over the head of

The Beautiful Carvings.

the monarch like a kind of protecting angel is to be found the picture of something living with two wings, two hands, a tail, and a human face bearing the features of the monarch. There is a belt round its waist, one of its hands holds a rounded scroll, and the other hand is raised aloft. This picture draws our attention to a passage in the Farvardin Yesht, where we are told that the king of the land calls Farohars to his help, and when they approach they are described as winged birds floating down to the land (Yesht XIII. 69-70). Yesht XIII. 67, describes the Farohars as fighting like bold and fully armed Ratheshtars on behalf of the king. The carving we have just described appears to have been an embodiment in stone of the description given in the Fravardin Yesht. According to the Zoroastrian Religion, every man has his own protecting Farohar, and this figure in stone must be the Farohar of Darius. It is the figure of a male-bird with wings which seem to protect the monarch. On the belt which is carved round the waist of the Farohar appear what look like arms; and like an armed and valiant Ratheshtar the Farohar appears to keep watch over the king, his palaces, his Astodans, and other monumental works. Perhaps the artist who carved this figure may have been a cultured magi (mobed) of the times. Other figures which appear on the Astodan include dogs and other animals used in hunt. The bow held in one hand of the monarch and the figures of these animals are characteristic of the monarch. Strabo has told us that the Astodan of Darab bore the following inscription : "I am unrivalled as a rider, and as an archer; in hunting no one can come upto me." Thus the carvings on the one hand remind us of the favourite activities of the monarch, and on the other hand of the days when his body and his soul were to be separated. Associated as the picture is with the death of the monarch, it seems to tell us how the bow without the arrow is like the body without the soul, and that the Farohar is like an arrow discharged from the bow sustained by itself in the sky.

This is an important question which gave rise to diverse conflicting opinions some time ago. Some scholars tell us that the **Were the Asto-
daans intended to
preserve the bo-
nes of the dead?** Astodâns were intended to preserve the bones of the dead as a kind of relic. We cannot accept this opinion, as bones can never be preserved as relics. They are liable to decay with the lapse of time. Sooner or later they are reduced to ashes, dust to dust, according to the law of nature. Those who accept this opinion seem to be oblivious of the working of nature's laws even if they do not contravene them. Not one of the travellers who have seen the Astodâns of the Achaemenian period have found in them even the vestiges of the ashes of bones.

An Astodân meant originally a structure for depositing the bones of the dead. A grave misunderstanding appears to have arisen in connection with these structures 2500 years ago, and this misunderstanding has survived to our own times. The original object of building these Astodâns appears to have been to isolate the bones after the flesh has been disposed of, so that they may be reduced to ashes, dust to dust. This original religious injunction seems to have been lost sight of by the Iranians of a later age, who thought that it was necessary to preserve the bones of the dead, and this idea seems to have been first entertained by the Parsis under the later Achaemenides, for both Herodotus and Strabo give us instances of this Parsi custom 2500 years ago. and tell us that the Iranians buried (placed in Astodâns) their dead bodies (bones) after applying wax to them. Evidently this idea of preserving for the future some portion of a dead man's body must have been borrowed by the Iranians from neighbouring communities; for many of these communities were familiar with the practice of preserving the memory of the dead by some relic of their bodies. Thus in ancient Greece and Rome the ashes after the bodies were burned were preserved, amongst the Egyptians the skeletons of mummies, and amongst other ancient communities other parts of dead bodies.

The Greeks and Romans used to preserve the ashes of the dead in urns, but this practice was entirely unfamiliar to the **The Idea of preserving the bones** Zoroastrian Religion. Moreover, like the Egyptians we believe in resurrection; and the Egyptians thought that when the souls of the dead once again enter the bodies, **non-Zoroastrian** these bodies will revive ; so that they were anxious under **idea.** any circumstances to preserve the bodies. They used all kinds of fragrant balms for this purpose, and the bodies were known as "mummies." The gorgeous Pyramids were built by them for the purpose of preserving these mummies. But in spite of all their art and science the mummies were reduced to ashes, and when we now behold them we find that there is neither flesh, nor bone, nor skin left. The plaster which they used to apply to the skin gives us the appearance of a dead body. But inside there is only dust and ashes. The laws of nature cannot be counteracted by human art or industry. Now the Iranians were familiar with the religious injunctions which call on them to get the flesh of the dead disposed of by wild animals. But they were also familiar with the injunction which called on them to isolate the bones and to place them apart. Thus arose the mistaken notion that underlying this injunction must have been the desire to preserve the bones for the day of judgment when the dead would revive. This idea seems to have been borrowed by the Iranians from the Egyptians. For in the early days both these races were living side by side in middle Asia. Ultimately it found its way into religious writings, and we have been told that on the day of judgment our bones will come to life again. It is true that the Zoroastrian Religion was the first to proclaim the doctrine of the judgement; Eastern and Western scholars alike agree that it found its way subsequently into other Religions. Nevertheless, the idea that on the Day of Judgment the bones of the dead will live again, and therefore that these bones should be preserved, is not a purely Zoroastrian idea; but arose in later times and under alien influences.

The belief that the dead could come to life again only through the instrumentality of the bones is hardly consistent with the omnipotence of God and with the unalterable character of his laws. God with His power can create human life out of a grain of sand or out of a drop of water. If the survival of life depended only upon the bones we ought to find a reference to this subject in the very passages where the welfare of the entire world is predicted in the day of Judgment. But we find neither in these passages nor anywhere else any reference to the preservation of bones, or even to the belief, that the revival of life is dependent upon such preservation.

The reference in the Jamiyad Yesht to the day of Judgment contains not a single word about the setting up again of the bones of the dead. We find a sentence there which tells us that the dead will be set up again but in this sentence there is not any trace of a word resembling "ast" which is the word for "bones." Through some misunderstanding this reference to the setting up again of the dead was confused with the idea of the setting up of the bones of the dead, and thus to the practice of preserving the bones of the dead. The Persian "Rastākhezh" is derived from, nay may be regarded as a literal Persian translation of the Avestan "Irist Usolisht" and it means "the rising of the dead" not "the rising of bones."

What was then the original object for constructing Astodāns ? We find in the Vendidad in answer to a question about the disposal of a dead body an injunction that after the flesh has been removed the bones should have attached to them some heavy weight, and the reason alleged is that wild animals would be prevented from removing the bones to the vicinity of pure water; a severe penalty is attached to any neglect in the observation of this rule; and when a second question is asked as to what should be done with the bones of the dead in order that the object already indicated may be carried out, we have the injunction to build

Astodāns (Vendidad VI. 44-51). Here we have clearly indicated to us the one great reason for the proper disposal of bones, and that is that the diseased and infected bones should be isolated from contact with water and vegetation so intimately associated with health. The Vendidad further enjoins that not even the smallest fragment of a bone should be allowed to lie about (Vendidad VI. 10). If there had been any other reason for isolating the bones we ought to find a reference to this reason in these passages of the Vendidad. If the reason for isolating the bones had been that they were to be set up again, this was the proper place where mention should have been made, leaving aside the passage of the Jamiyad Yesht.

Was the reason for isolating the bones in an **Astodān** that of preserving them? The question about the disposal of the bones in the Vendidad is itself significant. The question specifically raised is as to where these bones were to be carried and where they were to be deposited. The words "bar" and "nidath" in Avesta stand for "to carry" and "to place." They do not mean "to preserve" or "to take care of." The word for "preserving" or "taking care" in Avesta is "nipā," and the nouns and verbal forms derived from the root "nishar;" none of these forms are to be found in this passage of the Vendidad. Thus this idea about the preservation of bones and about their being set up again in the future is misleading and opposed to the spirit of the religion.

Even 1500 years ago under the Sassanides scholars seem to have been inquiring into and carrying on discussions about this subject. Though to the Iranians of the Avestan age this question could have offered no difficulties, doubt seems to have occurred to these Iranian scholars of a later age. They endeavoured to throw light on this question by references to Pahlavi works. They even went to the length of quoting from other religions which have borrowed the Zoroastrian belief in the Day of Judgment. They argued somewhat as follows :

The Zoroastrian Religion has taught us that in the future there was to be a memorable time when the dead will come to life again, and the whole of nature will be happy and blessed. The preservation of the bones of the dead was a necessary preliminary for this revival of dead bodies. When however difficulties were raised as to how the dead could revive, a learned Dastur of the Sassanide times endeavoured to meet them by pointing to passages in various Religions.

(1) Ahurmazd tells Zarathushtra "when I sustain the sky aloft without any support and keep the earth suspended in the air with all the millions of lives that it contains, when the sun and the moon and the stars keep up their movements through me, when all these wonders of nature are of my making, I have accomplished a task more difficult than that involved in the wonders of the Day of Judgment; and on the day of final judgment I shall have the help of others on which I could not and did not count in the commencement of all existence. When there was nothing in existence I planned and brought to perfection this universe of things and living beings. Can I not then bring to life again the things which have already been in existence? On the Day of Judgment as originally arranged at the beginning of creation the spirit of the earth shall be asked to restore the bones, the waters shall be asked to restore the blood, the trees to restore life, and fire to restore the soul." (Bundahishn.)

(2) But some men will say 'how are the dead raised up? And with what body do they come?' Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened except it die, and that which thou sowest thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat or of some other grain. But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased Him and to every seed His own body.....so also is the Resurrection of the dead. It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body (I Corinthians, chapter XV, 36 following).

(3) "It is true that we shall raise the dead to life again. One witness to the Day of Resurrection is this that we make the dead alive with the help of the rains, making it yield grains of several kinds which support mankind. We are asked who can put life again into bones raised to life again. He will do it, who gives you fire out of the green tree" (Koran).

The evident intention in all these three passages from Iranian and non-Iranian sources is to impress upon the people the omnipotence of the Creator, who can bring into existence that which did not exist at all. The learned Parsi Dastur's disquisition on this point is characteristic.

As we have already stated many of the early communities used to **The Practice of cherishing the memory of the Dead.** cherish the memory of the dead by the preservation of different parts of the body. The Zoroastrian Religion never taught that it was possible to preserve the memory of the body through any such material relics. It teaches us to remember the dead through the Farohar which is so intimately associated with the good and evil of the living soul. It is not the ashes or the bones or the skeleton or the hair or any other part of the body, but the undying spirit of the dead man that will enable us to keep his memory alive. The description of this spirit that we find in our Religion tells us that it has been uncreated and is undying, that it is the same spirit as associated with Ahurmazd that enabled Him to bring into existence and to preserve the universe. The same spirit along with others takes a leading part in spreading and promoting happiness and well-being in the universe. It has been at work from the earliest times in the material and spiritual worlds, and will be at work till the final consummation of events. The Zoroastrian Religion enjoins on all its followers to manifest their sense of obligation to this spirit and to cherish the memory of the dead through it alone. Thus whereas other communities of the past and the present have cherished the memory of

the dead through instruments which are perishable, the Zoroastrian Religion hit upon the one efficient, because undying, means of carrying out this object. In later Sassanian times changes occurred in this practice, and the memory of the dead was cherished through his Ravan as much as through his Farohar. Whereas in the Avestan writings it is only the Fravashis that are remembered, in the later Pazend writings both the Ravans and Farohars are remembered together, and the Ravan takes a larger place. Just as the Zoroastrian Religion does not enjoin on us to cherish the memory of the dead through any part of his body, so there is no injunction to resort to figures or models, statues or paintings, or any other material embodiments for cherishing the memory of the dead. Our Religion asks us to keep in mind the beautiful works of nature, fire, waters, and so on ; and to sing the glories of God as the author of these wonders ; and on occasions when we desire to call back to our minds those who have died, or other similar occasions, it would be impious according to the spirit of our Religion to resort to any material embodiment, any idol or image.

DAREMEHER—THE ABODE OF MEHER.

Just as with the change of time and circumstances changes have occurred in the character and structure of Atesh-Beherams and Astodâns and Dakhmas, so also do we find changes taking place with the lapse of time in the case of Daremehers. It would seem that amongst the Peshdâdians and Kyannians no separate structures or temples were erected in honour of the different Yazads. Nor do we find amongst them any worship of the Yazads offered in such temples. The spot selected for offering thanks-giving and prayers in those early days were open plains and imposing mountains with the sky as the only roof, where nature's beauties would be manifest and would bear witness to the power of the Almighty. The tops of mountains, the shores of lakes, and rushing streams are found selected as the spots for prayers in the Yeshts. They kept alive fires on elevated hill-tops, and these spots were known in Avesta as "Dâitya-Gâtu", and in Pahlavi as "Dâd-Gâhs", which alike mean "an appropriate spot" (Bundahishn). There is no reference here to any structures. In later times Persian historians confused the Dâd-Gâhs with Atesh-Kadehs, or Atesh-Khanes, or the abodes of fire, evidently because some time before their own age and some time after 401 B. C. the practice of building some kind of abode for fire and other Yazads came into vague. Similarly though Atesh-Beherams only came into existence after 226 B. C. historians have called by the name of Atesh-Beherams the Atesh-Kadehs which were built before that period. The ruins of structures noticed by travellers on elevated spots belonging to the Achaemenian and pre-Achaemenian times must have been temporary structures, or natural shelters in the form of caves intended to protect the fires against the effects of storms.

Even down to the commencement of the Achaemenian period it was a usual practice for the people to offer prayers standing before the fire and other objects of nature under the open sky. This practice

seems to have been given up in later times when different kinds of structures were raised for the worship of different Yazads—a change great indeed, but in no way a desirable change. After the end of the Achaemenian rule men began to resort to the undesirable practice of worshipping idols and other representations of different Yazads which were placed in separate structures, at the cost of that earlier custom which made it possible for men to appreciate and admire the works of God and the beauties of nature in the light of the sun and under the canopy of the sky. This change may have been due to the descriptions of the abodes of certain Yazads to be found in the Avesta. We find references in history to the practice having originated in this manner. Amongst the many structures that were raised for the worship of Yazads in the Achaemenian period may be mentioned the temples dedicated to Anāhitā (Ardisur), Maher, Sraosh, Bahman, and Amardād. The Avā Yesht contains the following description about the structure that is to be raised to Anāhitā "Remarkable structures of a permanent character with a hundred windows, a thousand pillars, and a thousand minarets, splendid to behold, and constructed by the labour of eminent artisans are to be found built on some of the many streams that belong to her (Ardisur). In these structures are to be found beautiful thrones or altars bright and shining covered with carpets and decked with pillows and associated with fragrant smells." (98-99).

History tells us of the Achaemenian monarch Artaxerxes Mnemon (Ardashir II), who caused to be built in honour of Ardisur Anāhitā a number of splendid structures at Susa, Persipolis, Ecbatana, Bactria, Babylon, Damascus, and Sardis. The one at Ecbatana was the most imposing of all these. Its pillars were gilded with precious metals and the tiles over the roof were made of silver and the bricks used in the walls were some of them of solid silver and others were encased in gold. According to Rawlinson the temple of Anāhitā at Ilimais contained enormous treasures. Such temples have been known to

exist down to the commencement of the Sassanian period. Ardashir Babakan is said to have entrusted his wise minister and learned Dastur Tansar with the ecclesiastical lordship of the temple of Ardisur Anahita—a temple which was afterwards converted into an Atesh-Beheram.

Similarly we find in Yasna 57,21, a description of the structure dedicated to Sraosh: "Whose (Sraosh) abode is built on Mount Alborz—a pile resting on a thousand pillars well lighted from within, and on the outside shining with all the beauty and splendour of a star." Evidently this must be a description of the temples which arose in later times in honour of Sraosh Yazad.

The Meher Yesht gives us the description of a similar structure dedicated to Meher Yazad: "Whose abode is as wide as this perishable earth, permanent, spacious, and splendid to behold" (44). "For whom (Meher) Ohrmazd has built on Mount Alborz a dwelling place" (50). "Anyone who brings a thanks-offering to his (Meher's) abode, may he be praised and blessed" (137).

According to the Rivayats there is a Daremeher on Mount Alborz where the two immortals Yopadshah and Dastur Homa daily recite the Yasna in honour of Ohrmazd. According to the Meher Yesht in very primitive times the prophet Homa Frashmi was the first to have honoured and sacrificed unto Meher on Mount Alborz, and he was the first to have taught men to honour him (Meher Yazad), (88-94).

Rawlinson tells us that the Achaemenian monarchs Ardashir II, and Darab III had built structures in honour of Meher—evidently the Ebādat Gahs in honour of Meher, or Daremehers. Strabo informs us that there were similar structures in honour of Bomon and Amardād.

We propose on this occasion to consider carefully the nature of the Abode of these abodes of the Yazads, and we shall find that Yazads and the these descriptions in the Avesta are poetic and Celestial Canopy. allegorical, and that the abode of the Yazads

is the name given to the celestial vault. The following are some of the adjectives which are used in connection with this abode:

“Bâmim”= “light-giving” (especially the light imparted by heavenly bodies); “frâthveresat yo dadvâs Ahuro Mazdâo”= formed or shaped by Ahura Mazda”; “Kerenâun Amesâs Spenta”= “formed by the Amshaspands”; “Khâ-raokhshnem antarât naemât”= “shining naturally and with its own light”; and “Steharpaesdhem nishtar naemât”= “decked on the outside with celestial bodies.”

The last two qualificatives are especially noticeable. They are especially connected with the light associated with the abode of the Yazads. Two kinds of light are described, the light shining from within the abode, and the light on the outside of the abode—the former, the natural light of the sky, and the latter, the light of the planets and stars appearing in the sky. The former type of light is as wide as the sky and shines of itself, the latter emanates from the stellar bodies. In the description of the abode of the Yazads there is no question of any artificial light. A passage from the Vendidad throws further light on this question. In the settlement of the Var of Jamshid reference is made to two kinds of light, one of them is called “Khadhâtacha Raochâo” which corresponds to “Khâ-raokhshna” already used in connection with the abode of the Yazads. Both those expressions alike signify natural light. In contrast with this light is mentioned “Stidhât raochâo”, or “artificial light”. Vendidad II tells us further that “Khadhât” is the light intended for the day-time, and “Stidhât” for the night-time. Now in the settlement of Jamshid artificial light is as necessary as natural light, but there are no artificial abodes of the Yâzads. Consequently there is no need for artificial lights in connection with those abodes, nor is there any reference to the necessity for such artificial light in connection with such abodes.

Secondly, Meher Yesht 50 gives us the following description of the abode of Meher Yazad built on Mount Alborz. “Here there is no night, no darkness, no cold winds or warm winds, no filth arising

from plagues nor any created by the Devs, nor does any hot steam reach the abode". In this passage two expressions must be noticed, viz., "Haraithyo paiti barezayao" and "upairi haram berezaitim" which are usually taken to mean "on Mount Alborz". And based on this interpretation is the story that there is a Darmeher on Mount Alborz where the two immortals Yopadshah, son of the holy Agreras, and Dastur Homa, worship Ahura Mazda by means of Yasnas. Evidently the words "on Alborz" do not mean "on the top of the Mount" but refer to the stellar vault to be seen over or in the direction of the Mount. The word "paiti" used in the expression means "in the front of", or "before", or "facing one", and according to our interpretation the abode of Meher is the portion of the stellar vault facing Mount Alborz. This interpretation is further supported by this very Avesta passage, where we are told that "on (upairi) Alborz a number of lights (bamyam) revolve". There is a reference here to the innumerable stars and planets to be seen in the sky, and the object in the passage is to indicate the movements of the stellar bodies in the portion of the heavens facing Mount Alborz. We are also told that there is no night or darkness there, whereas in the abode of Meher Yazad, if it were an artificial structure, there would be light in the day-time and darkness in the night. We are also told that no steam ever reaches this abode. Those words can only refer to something beyond our immediate atmosphere, a place which not even the highest peak of Alborz can reach. This Mount according to scholars is 18,000 feet high. The spot to which no steam can rise must therefore be not any high peak of Alborz, but something beyond our earthly atmosphere, it can only mean the broad expanse of the heavens, containing the abodes of Meher and Srosh. This abode knows none of the maladies or evils associated with our earth. We have in the Vendidad the description of a happy place on the earth which resembles to a certain extent the description of the heavens, and indicates the difference between the bodily and the spiritual. Vendidad II tells us in connection

with the new settlement of Jamshid made on a spot called Sruva within the limits of the district of Pars in Iranvej that it is a place where there is no pride, nor enmity, no treachery nor slander, no injustice nor misery—a place where Righteouness prevails. Here there are no cold winds nor hot winds, no old age or sudden death, and father and son remain youthful in appearance like boys of fifteen (Yasna 9, 5). In this settlement Jamshid is said to have erected structures of all kinds for the preservation of health and happiness, and men were free from all bodily and spiritual ills. Men enjoyed a happy life in this Paradise, though only for a short time. This comparison between the description of the settlement of Jamshid and the description of the abode of the Yazads shows to us that whereas the former description is reminiscent of human habits and bodily conditions, the latter describes a condition of abiding light and spiritual welfare. Though the words "upairi" and "paiti" are sometimes used in connection with material objects, they cannot be used in that sense when they are used in connection with the abode of Meher or of Sraosh. We have a striking confirmation of our theory in the Meher Yesht (XIII), where we are told that before the sun disappears from the horizon Meher Yazad occupies its own seat in the East. For occupying this seat the Yazad has to cross over from one place to another, and this act of crossing over is not described as taking place on the summit of Alborz, but as a movement from the other side of Alborz, towards the peaks of that mountain ("Tars harām berezaitim"), that is, the Yazad is described as shining from above the mountain. If the abode of Meher was the summit of Alborz itself, there was no necessity for the Yazads coming from another direction beyond the mountain. The word "tars" thus clears up the question, and indicates that the abode of Meher was some other place than the mountain, viz., the sky.

We have another piece of evidence in support of the theory that the abode of the Yazads is the vault of the sky. This is to be found

in the Fravardin Yasht (III), where the abode of the Yazads is characterised as "Stehar paesad-hem", an adjective which is also used to qualify the sky itself with all its bodies. The sky is described in somewhat allegorical language as wearing an apparel studded all over with stars. The same adjective is used in the Avesta in connection with the car of the Yazads, and also about the ritualistic instrument Havan. The poet who composed the yesht spoke of the sky as "the car of the Yazads" and the material instrument "Havan" used in the ritual is given the symbolic form "sky". The abode of the Yazads is called "perethu" = "wide", "vournashtem" = "with a large expanse", and "zem fratho" = "wide and open like the land". The author of this description evidently intended to describe the wide expanse of the sky. We are also told that Ohrmazd and the Amshashpands themselves built and decorated the abode of the Yazdas. These Amshashpands are called "the friends of the sun" — "hvare-hazaohāo". The Amshashpands thus described could only be the bodies of the solar system, and the portion of the sky associated with this solar system is recognised as the abode of Meher Yazad (Meher Yesht II). In one place (Yasna 57,12) Srosh Yazad is described as proceeding towards the company (vyākhanem) of these Amshashpands after being freed from the stress of the stellar war. Meher Yesht 65 speaks of Meher Yazad as the chief or president of the stellar assembly made up of the Yazads and Amashashpands (vyākhnanām vyākhno).

All these evidences indicate that the abode of the Yazads is not a material abode, the product of human skill and enterprise, nor that any human skill was employed in planning its design. The hand and the mind that were employed in raising this structure of the Yazads were the hand and the mind of Ahura Mazda and His Amshashpands. It is the sky bedecked with its starry gems that is called the abode of the Yazads and the poet conveys to us an idea of its beauty by describing it as a palace with its minarets and pillars and windows richly furnished and decorated. Some of these Yazads are

residents of the sky, and hence their residence is spoken of as a palatial structure. These poetic descriptions gave rise in later times to the practice of raising regular structures for the worship of different Yazads, and history has preserved to us notices of such structures in the past.

As we have already seen amongst the many houses of prayer raised in honour of different Yazads was one in honour of Meher Yazad. Though originally this building was dedicated to the worship of Meher Yazad, amongst us today we have only a single structure for the common worship of all the Yazads, which we call by the name of Daremeher. The reason for this change may perhaps be found in the fact that the worship of Mithra is to be traced back to very early times, and that this worship was not confined to the Iranians alone, but had spread amongst many other nations under the name of the God Mitra. Meher was thus looked upon as a great God or Yazad, and the Daremeher, built in his honour, was in later times used for the worship of all Yazads. We shall see further on that this change is closely associated with the beginning of the Sassanide rule.

One practice that came into existence in connection with the **The Rise of Undesirable Ceremonial Practices in the Abodes of the Yazads.** different abodes set up in honour of different Yazads was that of placing in them idols or representations of the Yazads. These were decked with all kinds of precious stones. Animals were sacrificed

unto them, and vows offered for the fulfilment of wishes. One reason for the introduction of these undesirable practices seems to be the description of the Yazads in the yesht as "young heroes fully armed for battle", or "as beautiful maidens decked in attractive apparel". These allegorical descriptions were in later times mistaken for description of real men and women. History gives us evidence of the influence of these allegorical descriptions on these fanciful representations of the Yazads. Ardvishur Anahitā is thus al-

legorically described in the Avan Yesht. "She is in the prime of youth, bold, well-developed in body, decked in rich apparel, with jewelled socks on her feet, straight in stature, brilliant, and generous-hearted. She has assumed the form of a beautiful maiden, dressed in a golden garment, beautiful to behold, known as Atka. From her ear hangs a four-cornered gem with a pendant attached. Her neck is graced with a golden necklace. The belt round her waist makes her look youthful. On her head is an eight-cornered crown of remarkable workmanship made of gold, set with a hundred diamonds and pearls (stars), and with the carvings of a war-chariot and a standard of battle. The garments that she wears are made out of the skins of thirty beavers of the finest colour, animals that give birth to four young ones at a time." The beaver is a marine animal whose skins can only be removed at specific times, and these skins are spotted with brilliant silver and golden spots. According to Rawlinson the Achaemenian monarch Ardashir II (Arta Xerxes) in an inscription discovered at Suza says that he had caused to be prepared an idol of Anāhīta which was placed in the special abode dedicated to her. Barosus tells us that the same monarch had caused similar idols to be made and placed in Babylon, Ecbatana (Hamadan), Damascus and Sardis, and that he had issued instructions for the worship of this idol amongst the Iranians and Bactrians.

The Meher Yesht gives us the following allegorical description of Meher Yazad: "We offer sacrifices to the powerful hero Meher Yazad who wears a silver helmet, a golden coat-of-mail and who is decked with arms. Who rides a white horse, who carries a fine edged spear and fast flying arrows, and who overcomes in battle all who encounter him". "Meher Yazad carries in both his hands an iron mace gilt with gold with a hundred edges and a hundred heads, swift flying, overthrowing with its might all who dare to face it". We have here an allegorical description of the natural light of Meher. The sharp edged instruments are the rays of its light with the help of which Meher

Yazad, as the presiding deity over Light and Righteousness, overthrows all Devs and Drujs—all evils, all maladies, all lies, etc :

History tells us that the Achaemenian monarch Ardashir II, and later on, Darab III, had introduced into Iran the idol of Meher, and that Ardashir had been the first to offer sacrifices to the deity, as his protector (Rawlinson). We are also told of a similar idol worship towards the end of the Achaemenian period. In connection with the two Yazads Behaman and Amardad, temples were built in their honour, and the Magi priests used to go in large numbers to them for prayers and sacrifices. The idol of Behaman was carved out of wood, and it was carried about in procession on special occasions.

We find similar allegorical descriptions of other Yazads, e. g., in connection with Vayu (Ram), in the Ram Yesht we have the following description : "The Yazad Vayu has remarkable feet, he is broad-chested, eagle-eyed, and is broad in waist. He is dressed in gold embroidered garments. He has a golden helmet on his head and a jewelled crown. A golden necklace adorns his neck. He has golden sandals, and a golden belt round his waist".

The allegorical character of these descriptions was forgotten in later times and gave rise to the practice of making idols to the Yazads. It is also possible that idol worship amongst the Iranians may have been due to the contact with other idol-worshipping communities like the Brahmins, the Assyrians, and the Babylonians. The later Achaemenian monarchs fell a prey to this idol-worshipping tendency, and introduced this alien element into their ancestral religion. The other nations who surrounded the Iranians had erected temples for the worship of Anahita and other Yazads, though these were known to them under different names.

The Iranians, however, seemed to have refrained from an indiscriminate adoption of some of the cruder practices which were in vogue amongst the other nations in connection with the worship of these deities. According to Plutarch the headship of the temple of Anahita

at Amadan was given to a priestess who led a pure life. Dr. Rapp tells us that though the Iranians worshipped Anāhita, they did not resort to some of the undesirable ceremonials, which were usually associated with the worship.

Though all kinds of alien elements were introduced into the Religion of the Achaemenian rulers, monarch like Darius, Xerxes, Cambyses were believers in a single Ahura Mazda, as evidenced by the inscriptions at Bihistun and other places. Darius and Xerxes are known to have seized and destroyed the idols of the Greek Gods and Goddesses, which fell into their hands when invading Greece. When Cambyses conquered Egypt he is said to have destroyed the idols of their God, who delighted in the sacrifices of flesh and blood.

These alien elements of an undesirable character which were introduced under the Achaemenians persisted in the Religion down to the end of the Parthian dynasty. We find no traces of these, however, in the times before the Achaemenian rule or after the destruction of the Parthians. No Sassanian monarch is reported to have set up and worshipped any idol of the Yazads. On the other hand we are told that Ardashir Babakan, when he invaded Kerman, eradicated all traces of idol worship which he found widely prevalent in the district (Karnameh, Ardashir Babakan). It was in memory of his great work of consolidating his power and of concentrating all temporal and spiritual authority in the hands of a single ruler that Ardashir had built Atesh-Behrams. Ardashir had for this purpose even gone to the length of reducing the numbers of the separate Atesh-Kadehs erected by the Subahs of different provinces in their own districts, as these had fostered disunion. Ardashir converted these Atesh-Kadehs into Atesh-Beharams. Similarly, Ardeshir appears to have converted into Atesh-Beharams (Daremehers) ¹ all the different temples that he found in his times built for the worship of different Yazads. He had enthroned natural light-giving fires in the place of the artificial symbols of the Yazads. As Meher, Sraosh, Ardisur, and other Yazads were armed and

crowned heroes in the allegorical descriptions of the Avesta, so Adar (fire) Yazad is described as "a Ratheshtār", but no arms or crown or throne is associated with him in the Avestan descriptions, and yet the idolising tendencies of the times had endowed the sacred fire with a mace and a sword, a crown and a throne. The wisdom and foresight of the learned Dastur Tansar saved the followers of the religion from the disgrace of idol-worship. He and Ardashir cooperated in the work of suppressing this alien practice and destroying all traces of idol-worship from the land. We can thus understand why in the Pahlavi writings and the Pazend prayers, that were composed in the Sassanide times, specific condemnation of this undesirable practice should occur, and the practice should be reckoned as a crime, though in the Avestan writings themselves we find no reference to Idol-worship or Bud-Parasti.

We call a Daremeher today " an Agiari " which is not a Persian name, but is due to our contact in India with the Hindoos. Agiari is a corrupted form of Sanskrit " agni alaya " or agni+agar " = " the abode of fire " and corresponds to the Persian Atesh-Kadehs compare the expression ' Muktātmā ' used for the day of Fravardagan, Dhup-Sarna used for Nirang-e Buldān etc. "

THE ASTRONOMY OF THE AVESTA.

We have various descriptions of the chariots and horses of the Yazads in the Avesta. The Yazads are described as riding in cars to which horses are yoked, and these cars or chariots are described as fully equipped with arms. The allegorical character of these descriptions was lost sight of in later times, when chariots with horses yoked to them were taken to the battle-field, and idols of the Yazads were placed in the chariots drawn out in military procession. The heroes and monarchs of Iran in their wars against their enemies used to take vows to the Yazads, to ask all sorts of boons from them, and believed that they could prevail over their enemies with the help of these Yazads. The Iranians were in those times profoundly influenced by the idea that a community, which grows irreligious and falls a prey to vices, is overwhelmed with calamities and is ultimately destroyed. But with the lapse of time, as we shall see, the Iranians lost sight of this healthy precept, and when they went to war, thought it necessary to secure the presence of the Yazads who were their friends and protectors in their midst. It was usual for their monarchs when they went to war to go to the battle-field to ride in chariots drawn by horses and to issue commands to their armies seated the rein. The nobles and the heroes also used to fight riding in such chariots, and to the wheels of the chariots were attached all kinds of sharp and fatal instruments. The chariots were rushed into the midst of the hostile forces breaking their ranks. These chariots were known from the earliest Avestan period. They were called "Raths" and the heroes who rode in them were known as "Rathaeshtârs" = "those who fought riding in such chariots". Subsequently, all warriors as such were called Rathaeshtars. The Ram Yesht (28) tells us in connection with the hero Keresâsp "yatha janâni hitâspem raithe paiti vajadhai" = "I shall ride in a rath and kill "Hitâsp" (the murderer of Urvâkhsh). The

Achaemenian monarchs and heroes continued this practice of using the raths in battle, and even the Sassanian monarchs were familiar with them. The Hindoos, the Egyptians, and the Greeks, and other communities of early times were familiar with the use of the Raths. From the Puranas we learn that the Khsatri Kings used to fight riding in Raths. In the great war between Ram and Ravan the God Indra had supplied Ram with the completely equipped Rath known by the name of Aruna, and Ram had fought riding in this Rath. In the war described in the Mahabharatta between the Kauravas and the Pandavas the hero Arjun fought riding in a Rath known as Abhang, Shri Krishna fighting side by side with him in the same chariot. Just as amongst the Iraniáns the heroes fought riding in Raths and even the Yazads were made to ride in Raths, so amongst the Hindoos the Khsatri heroes fought in Raths, their gods were made to ride in Raths, and even some of the latter are described as fighting side by side with their worshippers in battle. Amongst such gods we find the names of Krishna, Varuna, Yama, and Agni. Even to-day we find survivals amongst certain communities of taking out in procession the Raths of the gods. Thus on the one hand there was the practice of using Raths in battles amongst the Iranians and other communities, and on the other hand we have the descriptions in the Avesta of the Yazads playing a prominent part on the field of battle. It is not surprising to find two famous Persian monarchs in later times introducing the practice of placing the idols or images of their favourite Yazads in Raths and taking them to the battle-field. These two monarchs were Cyrus and Xerxes. Cyrus is said to have organised the procession of Raths containing the Yazads when marching to battle. To these chariots were yoked splendid white horses with garlands of fragrant flowers round their necks. The Rath that headed this procession had seated in it, according to Herodotus, the famous god Jupiter. Behind it came the Rath of Mithra (Meher Yazad), and then that of Adar Yazad. According to Xenophon the yokes of these chariots were made of gold. So also Herodotus tells us of the famous procession of the chariots of the Yazads.

displayed by Xerxes on the eve of his expedition against the Greeks. (This chariot was called in mistake the Chariot of Jupiter). In this chariot of the Yazads no one can ride except the Yazads, and those who led the chariots walked on foot behind the horses. The chariot of Xerxes immediately followed the chariots of the Yazads.

The Iranians regarded this sacred chariot with as much devotion and respect as the battle-flag that led them to victory, and sometimes fought to death to prevent the enemy from seizing the chariot of the Yazads. The information we derive from history may be compared with what we learn from the Avestan writings. Firstly, (1) history informs us of the procession of the chariots of the Yazads in times of war, so also we find in the Avesta descriptions of the chariots of the Yazads associated with descriptions of battles. Secondly, (2) both history and the Avesta speak of the horses yoked to the chariot as pure white in colour. But whereas history tells us of eight horses, in the Avesta we find a reference to four horses being yoked to the chariot. Perhaps the historian only intended by his description to convey an idea of the pomp and splendour of the sacred chariot. When the historian speaks of the chariot that led the procession as the chariot of Jupiter, he is evidently labouring under some misapprehension. According to the Avesta the chariot that led the procession was the chariot of Beheram Yazad as a symbol of victory, or the chariot of Dâmi-Upaman. Behind it was the chariot of Mithra followed by that of Adar Yazad. The order of these chariots in procession reminds us of Meher Yesht 127; perhaps the monarchs of the times may have been influenced by that Avestan passage. We can well understand the importance attached to the chariot of Mithra by placing it in the middle in a position of honour, when we remember the part played by Meher according to the Avesta in wars and battles.

It is thus evident that at one time in Persia processions of the chariots of Yazads were common. The only thing that causes surprise is

that one of the two eminent monarchs who are thus named in connection with a practice bordering on idol-worship should be Xerxes, who during his famous expedition on Greece had destroyed the celebrated temple of Delphi, and broken the idols of their chief gods and goddesses including those of Apollo and Minerva. And yet it is not difficult to account for this anomaly; which has resulted from an ignorance and misunderstanding of some of the passages of the Avesta. We find in the Avesta descriptions of the chariots and horses of the Yazads and amongst those who rode in these chariots are Meher (Meher Yesht XXIV), Sraosh (Yasna.57,27), Rashnu(Meher Yesht 126), Boharam (Meher Yesht 127), Adar, and Ardisur (Avan Yesht 11). We have also descriptions of their armies, their arms, and armours, etc: The allegorical character of these descriptions does not reveal itself on the basis of a purely philological interpretation of the words, with the result that these descriptions were misunderstood, and gave rise to the practice of taking out idols of the Yazads in procession seated in chariots. It is our purpose on this occasion to throw light on these allegorical descriptions of chariots and horses, of battles and armies, of arms and military processions, and to get at a true interpretation of these descriptions, and we shall find that these allegorical descriptions constitute a collection of astronomical facts.

We find in the Zoroastrian Religion striking appreciation of the intelligence and wisdom of nature's God and the Yazads constitute an organic part of the phenomena of nature.

The Yazads as Stellar Phenomena. They are stellar bodies and the regular periodic movements of some of the Yazads have been described as the march of a stellar army. The descriptions of this march, or procession of the stars gives us simple astronomical truths. Though scholars have hitherto refused to believe that the Iranians were proficient in astronomical science, it is possible that we shall have to change our opinion and admire the astronomical scholarship of Iranian sages, when these

passages which describe the procession of the Yazads are properly interpreted in the future. We are already familiar with the fact that Khurshed (the Sun), Mah (the moon), Tir, and Vanant (Stars) are the names of Yazads; and these Yazads are names of planets, of satellites, of stars. Khurshed is the Sun and Mah is the moon. Moreover, in the Bundahishn the Yazads Tir, Beheram, Ahur (?), and Anahita are spoken of as planets, and they are said to be located in the constellations Tir, Haptorangh, Vanant, and Stavas. These very Yazads have been compared by Dr West and others to the planets Mercury, Mars, Jupiter, and Venus. Moreover, other Yazads besides these have been described as marching in procession in the sky. Amongst these latter are Meher, Sraosh, and other Yazads, to whom we have references, as moving about in their chariots in the sky. We shall see later on that some of the Yazads described as riding in chariots and moving in procession in chariots are simply stellar bodies with their regular movements in the heavens. Amongst them are Khurshed, Mah, Tir, Vanant, and other Yazads—stellar bodies whose brilliance is apparent to the naked eye, and behind these are the unseen presiding or ruling powers called by the name of "Yazads"

"Ujabājāush paiti amerekhtim fravajaite mathroyo vaouru gaoya-
otish hacha raokhshnāt garo-nmānāt vāshem srīrem Vavajānem
hāmo takhmem vispo paesem jaranaem" = "Meher
The Chariots of
the Yazads the Re-
volving Sky.
Yazad owning wide territories comes out from the
shining "Garomān", and proceeds towards
immortality seated in a golden chariot, swiftly
rolling, solid, beautifully decorated, showing the splendour of
stellar bodies". (Meher Yesht 124).

The chariots of the Yazads described in the Avesta are, as we have said, the expanse of the sky studded over with stars and planets, which has been allegorically described by the Avestan poets as a

chariot. We find in the Avesta descriptions of the periodic revolutions in the sky (the procession in chariots) of Meher, Sraosh, Rashnu, Fravashi, Beherām, Vayu (Rām), Anāhita, Chishta, Dāmi Upaman, Adar, and other Yazads. The Meher Yesht describes the stellar chariot of Meher. This chariot is called "Mainyu-Hāmtāshta", and "Bereji Chakhra", (*i.e.*, "a chariot resting on wheels with long spokes") (Meher Yesht 67). It is also characterised as "Aeva Chakhra", *i.e.*, "Single-wheeled", or "revolving in a uniform way", "Jaranaema", *i.e.*, "Golden coloured", and "Vispo Bām", *i.e.* "full of light, and more especially lighted with the light of the sky and the stellar bodies" (Meher Yesht 136). This chariot is also spoken of as "Stehara paesanghem", *i.e.*, "decorated with stars", and "Mainyu tāshtem", *i.e.*, "composed of mind or spirit." (Meher Yesht 143).

Thus we see that in the chariot of the Yazads there is no element of wood, or iron, or other destructible material; no human skill enters in the process of constructing it. In its structure are to be found solid, abiding, living, spiritual elements, and its design is the work of that architect of architects, Ahura Mazda. In the Jamyād Yesht (43) we have a characteristic example of the allegorical style of the old Iranian authors. The earth and the sky are the objects of description in this passage. "Jām chakhrem Kerenavāni. Asmanem rathemkerenavāni" = "I make a wheel of the earth and a chariot of the sky". Moreover, we find in the Fravardin Yesht (3) the two adjectives "Stehar paesanghem", and "Manyu tāshtem" applied to the sky itself and this finally dispels all doubt with regard to the allegory involved in the chariot of the Yazads. The reasons for describing the sky as a chariot are obvious. The Avestan poet believed that there was no object better adapted for describing the revolving sky than a chariot. But as a chariot cannot move of itself some source of motion was necessary, and, as the most appropriate object, a horse was selected for the purpose. As men on the

face of the earth can control horses, yoke them to carriages, and move about at their sweet will, so do the stars and planets move about in chariots in the sky according to the laws of Ohrmazd. These considerations throw new light on the designation of "Ratha eshtar", of warriors riding in the stellar chariot given to Meher, Srosh, Adar, and other Yazads in the Avesta.

"Ahamya vāsha vajāonte chathvāro auravanto spaetita ham gao-nāongho manyush khretha anaoshāongho" = "this chariot was driven by four white uni-coloured immortal horses living on spiritual food" (Meher Yesht 125).

What are these four horses referred to in the passage quoted above? We shall find that natural forces or powers have been described as the horses of the Yazads. These horses

The Horses of the Yazads **Natural Forces.** are described in Yasna 57 and in the Meher Yesht as "Mainyush Kharetha", i.e., "living on spiritual food"; "Anaoshāngho", i.e., "immortal"; "Mainyavāongho", i.e., "Spiritual"; "Asaya", "Shadowless"; "Mainivasangho" = "obedient to the will of the spirits"; "Vidhvāongho" = "endowed with knowledge", or conforming to the laws of nature", "Aurusha" "White". "Raokhshna" = "full of light", and "Frāderesra" = "Beautiful" (Meher Yesht 68, and Yasna 57,27).

It would thus appear that the horses of the Yazads are not physical objects or animals consisting of flesh, bone, or skin, that they have no need for any solid or liquid food, and that they never die, but are immortal. We may well suppose that these horses are the names of some of the unchanging and ever-abiding powers of nature. In the Avān Yesht we have a description of the four horses of Ardvī-sur, evidently forces of nature. They are described as follows: "Yenghe chathvāro arshān hām-tashta Ahuro Mazdāo vātemcha vāremcha māedhemcha frāyangbahumcha" = "whose four youthful

horses appointed by Ahrmazd are the wind, rain, clouds, and hail" (Avān Yesht 117). The horses of the Yazads then are only names of various elements or forces of nature. We have here a description of natural events, and the four elements that play a part in the production of rain have been described as the four horses of Ardvīsur. We have a similar description of the four horses of Meher and Srosh (Meher Yesht 68, Yasna 57, 27). The horses of Meher Yazad must evidently be the elements of nature which are at work, when the light of Meher reaches the earth. Yasna 57, 28, describes as the horses of the Yazads a number of elements, *viz.*: "Aspa", "Vata", "Maedha", and "Vaya"; similarly Tir and Beherām Yazads are described as themselves horses moving about in the sky, evidently with a view to indicate that their movements resembled those of horses (Tir Yesht 20, Beherām Yesht 9). As "Ardvisur Anāhita" is described as riding in a chariot with four horses yoked to it, so also "Apām-napat" is described as a smart horse owing to the resemblance between the swift movement of a horse and a rapidly rushing torrent. Even to-day in our Gujarati language we frequently speak of the tidal-horse or the water horse. The Khurshed Yesht describes the sun as a spirited horse owing to the greater rapidity of its movements when compared to the moon, whereas the slower movements of the moon are characterised as those of a cow or an ox. The light of dawn is described as "Raevat-aspā" = "spirited horses", and "Rənjat-aspā" = "smart horses." (Gāhe-Ushahen). We find in the Riga Veda "dawn" described allegorically as Devi Ushā".

In the Avesta the Evil Powers of the Devs and Drujes are also spoken of as horses. In the days of the hero Keresāsp there was born a proud and powerful monster by the name of Sanāvidhak. This monster was proud of its strength even when it was in the period of its infancy. The

**The Horses of the
Devs-Evil Powers.** Jamyād Yesht places the following words in his mouth: "I am yet only a child, when I grow in years I shall make the sky my chariot and the earth will be its wheel, and I shall yoke to

it as horses Spenāmino (the beneficent spirit) and Ganāmino (the destroying spirit). I shall achieve all this if only Keresāsp does not kill me." This proud monster was ultimately killed by Keresāsp. We have here again the sky described allegorically as a chariot, the earth as its wheel, and the two powers Spenāmino and Ganāmino, as horses. Tehemurasp is said to have tamed the horse Ganāmino and used him for thirty years as a riding animal. Thus Tehemurasp is said to have controlled every kind of evil, and to have taught his subjects to conquer human vices and other evils and thus attain to happiness. Tir Yesht 21 describes Tir Yazad as a splendid horse, whilst Apaosh Dev is spoken of as a black and ugly animal.

"Hām tāchit bāzush barato Spitama Zarathushtra tishtrayascha
raevāo Kharenanghāo daevascha yo apaoshō"

The Battles of the Yazads — Stellar Events. = "O Zarathushtra, Tir Yazad and Aposh Dev are alike gathering their forces (are waging battle) (Tir Yesht 21).

The strange and wonderful phenomena of the sky are allegorically described in the Avesta as wars between the Yazads and the Devs. These stellar happenings are unlimited in number. We shall only confine ourselves to one such description in the Tir Yesht — a description of rainfall. Tir is the name of a Yazad associated with a star, which like other stars and planets has its appointed movements in the sky. Iranian astronomers had in their own way calculated and ascertained the laws of movement of stellar bodies and believed that these movements produced effects on organic and inorganic objects on the surface of the earth and influenced the climate. They were also familiar with the existence of falling stars which, according to them, disturbed their calculations of the movements of the stars and were therefore regarded by them as "Dushyār", i.e., overthrowing the calculations about the length of the year, as evil powers and as reptilian stars. They believed that they had been created by Ahriman to confound and overthrow all accurate calcula-

tions of the movements of stellar bodies, as these evil meteorites disturbed the regular influence on the climate exerted by certain stars with the result that they were always uncertain and torn by anxiety as to whether the year would bring plenty and happiness or starvation and misery. When Tir Yazad was to be seen in the direction of Vourukash Sea, it was regarded as a sure indication of early rains. When Tir was to be seen for the first time in the sky, and seen for a considerable length of time, the weather-prophets were able to predict early rains in autumn.

There now rises a rival to Tir Yazad whose appearance is synchronous with a struggle between the Yazad and the Dev. The name of this Dev or rival is Apaosh, which means "one who dries up and destroys the water bearing clouds". The causes that thus obstruct rainfall and destroy the prosperity resulting from ample rain are personified as Apaosh Dev. The battle between Tir and Apaosh lasts for three days and three nights. In the early part of the battle Tir is foiled but ultimately he wins a victory over Apaosh. Freed from this struggle Tir proceeds to his appointed place in the sky in the direction of Vourukash, and with his presence there new life and strength are imparted to the waters. This may be an allusion to the process of the transformation of water into steam. About the same time the star Satavas makes his appearance in the sky, and under the joint influence of the two stars the waters begin to boil, the steam ascends upwards, and gathers till it takes the form of clouds and hail. Govād Yazad (wind) now appears on the field and carries them (the clouds and hail) forward to their proper place and with the co-operation of Apām-napat (the source or centre of water), khureh (the power that generates heat), and the Fravashis, the rain and hail are distributed and the earth rejoices on all sides with plentiful rain. We have endeavoured so far to interpret one stellar phenomenon from the description of the Tir Yesht. There are numerous allegorical descriptions of this

kind in the Avesta with reference to natural phenomena which bear witness to the knowledge and insight of the authors of the Avesta. The Rām Yesht (47-48) tells us with regard to Vayu Yazad: "I am called he who cries with a thundering voice, he who spits with anger, a sharp spear, he who wields a sharp spear." These are all undoubtedly references to thunder and lightning and other natural phenomena. The descriptions in the Bundahishn and in Zad-sparam about the battle between Tir and Apaosh are evidently indebted to the Avesta. These battles in the sky between the Yazads, which end in giving plenty and prosperity to the earth, must not be confounded with the destructive battles fought by selfish men for selfish purposes. If we are told in our sacred writings of how the Yazads take part on behalf of God-fearing countries in human battles, how they fight for such countries and shower their blessings on them, and on the other hand curse the Godless countries, the object of such descriptions is to preach God's message amongst men.

The arms used by the Yazads in their warfare must not be under-

The Arms and the Army of the Yazads. stood to be sharp and fatal instruments such as are used by men. For example, the arms used by Tir Yazad are only such invisible powers of nature as are involved in the phenomena of rain, lightning, steam, heat, wind, clouds, hail, etc. These and other beneficent instruments are the arms of the Yazads and they constitute their army (see Avān Yesht 117). With their help the Yazads keep away all things that obstruct the operation of natural laws and spread plenty and prosperity on the earth. No sharp instruments, no dagger or sword is needed by the Yazads for destroying the power or the forces of evil. We also find words of prayer described as the effective arms of the Yazads. Thus Sarosh Yazad is said to possess as his arms Ahunavar, Yasna Haptanghāiti, frashush manthra, and selections from the Yasna.

The army of the Yazads is made up of these powers or phenomena of nature, Avān yesht (117) makes this quite clear. "Mishti ji me him

Spitama Zarathushtra Vārentaecha snaejintaecha sraschanataecha fayanghuntaecha yenghe avavat haenanām nav-satāish hazangha-remcha" = In the direction of the River Ardvisur are to be constantly found rain and snow, fog and hail. They are like an army of 9,00,000 men belonging to Ardvisur.

We thus find that the chariots and horses of the Yazads, their wars and armies and armour are only allegorical descriptions. Lack of proper insight into the meaning of these allegorical descriptions led to the introduction in later times of actual chariots with idols of the Yazads seated in them, and a type of idol-worship became prevalent amongst the people. We find further corroboration of our interpretation of those allegorical descriptions in the Avesta in the references to the abode of the Yazads, the assembly of the Yazads, and their friendship towards one another, which we come across in Avestan writings. Our interpretation, moreover, finds support in the sculpture and architecture of ancient Iran, and we shall now proceed to a consideration of this subject, which has a further interest for us as bearing witness to the skill and genius of Parsi architects and artists of those early days.

We are familiar with the fact that the art of carving an inscription on stone had been considerably developed **Persepolis and Mount Pasargard.** during the Achaemenian Empire. The Sassanide architecture and carvings at Takhte Bostān and Phiruzabad, famous as they were, were still inferior in design and perfection to the creative work of earlier days. The beauty of this work has been repeatedly noticed by all travellers in Persia, and yet this art, which attained to such perfection in the Achaemenian period, was later on manifested in the creation of idols of all kinds, and favoured the growth of idol-worship. The ruins of places and inscriptions that still exist on the sides of rocks and mountains bear witness to the regular museums of carvings and

inscriptions which in earlier days must have attracted the admiration of the Iranian people. We find amongst these carvings faces of human beings, court-scenes, the march of armies, and other warlike pictures, war-chariots, hunting scenes, domesticated animals, hunting animals, birds, flowers, and foliage, and a variety of other objects. We shall confine our attention on the present occasion to only one aspect of these carvings, viz., to the images of fourfooted animals, some of them half men, half animals. In the balconies of palaces and in the corners of galleries overhanging court-rooms are to be found beautiful carvings of winged bulls and lions with the images of men. Each of these carvings is a beautiful example of the skill with which limbs and organs belonging to human beings, to quadrupeds and birds, are artistically combined in unique designs. One has a head like that of the eagle, ears like the horse's or the donkey's ears, the body of a lion, the feet and the tail of a quadruped, and the neck, the back, and the breast of a bird. Another is a lion with wings. A third is an animal with two tails and with horns like those of a deer, or a goat. One image is like the image of a man upto the waist. But this is combined with the tail and the wings of a bird. European travellers conjecture that these are imaginary carvings of giants and other strange creatures. Similar carvings are to be found in the palace at Niniveh, and are familiar in the Hindu Puranas, familiar as gods and goddesses. According to the late Mr. K. R. Cama the object of these carvings is to proclaim the presence of God in whatever is found to be good and noble and powerful amongst men and animals, to manifest in stone and rock the omnipotence of the creator.

The question then arises : are these pictures and images merely the product of a fertile imagination and purely mythical ? Or are they, on the other hand, representations of true events and familiar facts ? We have reasons to believe that these carvings are true representations of natural phenomena and the beauties of nature familiar to men. In the first place it is not possible that side by side with the pictures of

battles and battle-chariots, the march of armies, the hunting of animals, and other familiar events, the sculptors of those times should have carved images and designs of a purely mythical character. In the second place on the Astodāns and on the pillars of the royal palaces at Persepolis and mount Pasargard we have carvings of a number of planets and other stellar bodies, amongst others we have carvings of Khurshed, Mah, and Meher. Khurshed and Mah are carved one in the form of a round ball, the other as a segment. Meher is pictured as a simple circular wheel, and in later Sassanian times six rays of light are carved as radiating from it. We may well suppose that all these carvings were not the images of mythical monsters, but that they were descriptions of terrestrial and astronomical phenomena.

A third reason in support of our view is to be found in the Avesta

**The Images of
Farohar and the
Yazads.** itself. There is a famous picture of a creature having a human form upto the waist, and the wings of a bird, to be found on the palaces of Darius Hystaspes and Xerxes, and on the Astodān of Darius.

This image can be traced to a passage in the Fravardin Yesht, where we have an allegorical description of the Farohars, which has been closely copied by the Iranian architect. The Fravardin Yesht (69-70) speaks of the Farohar as "mānayen ahe yan nā meredho hupereno", that is, like a young man with the wings of a bird. It is clear that this carving is intended to indicate the Farohars or spiritual powers. The Iranian architects and designers had acquired their art from Assyrian and other foreign sources. Moreover the Fravardin Yesht describes the active part taken by the Farohars in the internecine struggles of the Iranians and their wars against enemies from without, and how they protected the Iranians in their struggles (47). The Farohars are the protectors of the Kings and the guardians of their palaces (67). They take a leading part along with other powers of nature in spreading prosperity on the earth (22). These allegories must have suggested to the Iranian monarchs the idea of perpetuating in stone on their palaces

and astodâns these protecting Farchars. Evidently, therefore, the other strange figures that we see carved on palaces and on rocks must be the figures of spiritual powers or astral bodies.

Fourthly, the Avesta attributes to several of the Yazads various forms. Yazads like Tir and Beheram are found described as having more than one form. Tir Yazad, as an astral body, assumes the forms of a young man, a bull, and a horse in each of the three divisions of its monthly revolution in the heavens (Tir Yesht 13,16,18.) Similarly Beheram Yazad assumes the forms of wind, of a bull, a horse, a camel, a boar, a man, a bird, a sheep, a ram, and a hero. And under these ten different forms he proceeds to the help of his worshippers (Beheram Yesht 1-27). This help is a poetic reference to the influence of the stars and the planets on the inorganic world and living creatures on the earth. The Vendidad describes Beheram Yazad as wearing a crown, that is as radiating light (Vendidad XIX, 37). Anâhita is spoken of as a beautiful and noble maiden who goes to the help of her worshippers (Avân Yesht 64). When Meher Yazad is in a certain position other Yazads—Rashnu, Chishta, Adar, Kyâni Khureh, and Dâmi Upaman—are found moving in their appointed paths. In these movements Dâmi Upaman assumes the form of a boar (Meher Yesht 124-127). Under certain circumstances the Kyâni Khureh assumes the form of a bird (Jamyâd Yesht 35).

All these forms described in the Avesta are only different signs of the Zodiac or constellation forms of the Yazads, and these forms have been allegorically described with all the characteristics of men and animals. According to these descriptions some have pure white bodies, some have their fore-feet shod with golden hoofs, and their hind-feet with silver hoofs. Some have golden ears or forehead and golden horns, whilst the arms, legs, mouth, tail, etc., of others are of iron. Some wear on their arms beautiful bracelets, and hold in their hands a sword with a golden handle and barsam, wear a golden crown

on their heads, others wear four-cornered earrings, a golden padan over their mouth, a golden necklace round their necks, a golden belt round their waist, and clothes of skin studded over with gold and silver embroidery. These references to different bodily organs and especially to white, golden, and silver colours, are allegorical descriptions of the light of heavenly bodies and their multi-coloured rays. We find, moreover, the names of Meher, Sarosh, Rashnu, and of other Yazads and Amshaspands as assuming various forms. At one place these forms of the Amshaspands are praised as beautiful (Srir), and wonderful (Verejadā), (Fravardin Yesht 81). In the Fravardin Yesht we have further evidence of the allegorical nature of these descriptions where the Sun is specifically spoken of as representative of light. In another place amongst the various forms attributed to Ohrmazd is mentioned one which is exceedingly beautiful (Sraeshtem kehrpem kehrpām). This form does not belong to any living animal, it is only the most brilliant forms of the light of heavenly bodies which are described as the forms of Ohrmazd (raochāo barejishtem berejimanām). Yasna 36,6, speaks of the light of the Sun as typical of these brilliant lights. It would thus appear that the animal forms ascribed to the constellation of Yazads and Amshaspands are only allegorical products of the poetic imagination of the authors of the Avesta. The early astronomers in their attempts at accurate calculations of the movements of the stars and planets divided all stellar bodies into twelve parts giving them the names of the twelve Zodiacal signs. Each Zodical division is called by a different name,—Leo, Taurus, Aires, etc., These names were suggested by the forms presented by different groups of stars as they moved round the sky, and they were intended to be roughly representative of these forms. We can understand therefore how Iranian astronomers intended to indicate different constellations of stars when they described Tir, Beherām, Dāmī Upaman, Anāhita, Fravashi, and other Yazads, as assuming the forms of a lamb, a bull, a horse, a young maiden, a bird, a camel, etc.

The Forms of Constellations and their Influence on Architecture. These allegorical descriptions of the constellation forms of the Yazads in later times got embodied into images in stone, and we find all kinds of strange carvings of creatures, like men with the wings of birds, winged lions with the horns of deer, and bulls on the sides of the entrances to the royal palaces, on the balconies, in the alcoves of overhanging galleries, and on *Astodâns*¹ These carvings were evidently inspired by the descriptions in the Avesta of the strange forms of the Yazads. These strange carvings are representative of the beautiful forms of constellations in the sky, and other splendid sights of nature. It is a beautiful example of how pictorial art can be utilised for familiarising men with the facts of astronomy. And though these Iranian carvings of the Achaemenian period have no scientific method about them, we have in other places in the world, e.g., at Eshneh in Egypt, and at Kanya Kumari in the South of India, accurate scientific representations of the signs of the Zodiac.

Our hypothesis is also supported by a reference to the animal forms ascribed to the divinities amongst other **Assyrian Divinities.** communities. Amongst the Assyrians and the Semitics we find carved images, half-man half-bird, half-man half-lion, and half-man half-bull, which were objects of worship. The human figure with the wings of a bird carved by the Iranians representing a Farohar is to be found also carved with some modification on the palaces and temples of the Assyrians, who recognised in it the image of their supreme deity Asur. The figure representing half-man half-bull is also to be found amongst the Assyrians and is known as the image of the god Nin. In the Persian “Desatir” it is known as *Beherâm Yazad* (the planet Mars) and called “Balrâm”. Even in the Avesta amongst the many forms which the

1. These carved figures of the winged bulls and lions to be seen in the palaces of the Achaemenian monarchs are imitated in the architecture of the new *Atesh-Behram* at Bombay.

poets ascribe to Beherām and Tir are those of a male, a bull, etc. The Assyrian image of the creature half-man half-lion is the representation of Nargāl Dev. Amongst the Hindus we have a worship of the idol of a god familiar in the Puranas as Nara-Sinh. This name resembles the Avestan name of the Yazad Nairyosangha. There is a close resemblance between the images of the Avestan and Assyrian Yazads and heavenly deities, e.g., those of Shamas and Khurshed, Sin and Mah and Mithra (the morning and evening twilight). This parallelism indicates that one out of these two peoples must have been influenced by the other. The Aryans and the Semitics belong to two different races. Amongst the Assyrians these images had temples erected to them where they were worshipped. These Assyrians had ruled over the land of Iran for over 520 years before the advent of the Achaemenians, and had come into close contact with the Iranians, with the result that their Semitic religion must have been brought under the influence of Zoroastrianism. Even before the establishment of Semitic rule in Iran, certain Aryan Yazads closely resembling the deities of the Riga-Veda were familiar to the Iranians, and the Semitics must have included these Yazads under different names and forms in their own Pantheon, made images of them, and worshipped these images, as they were an idol-worshipping people. As Zoroastrianism influenced the Semitic Religion the religion of the foreign rulers also left its impress on Zoroastrianism. We can trace this influence of the Assyrians on the Parsis in the architecture and carvings of the Achaemenian and Median periods. To this Assyrian influence also must be ascribed, the idol-worship that characterised later Zoroastrianism. This idol-worship arose from the fact that the images and carvings of deities in the palaces and temples of the Assyrians were copies to a large extent of earlier Iranian Yazads known under different names. Even though we differentiate between the Aryan Yazads and the Assyrian deities for the purposes of our hypothesis it is sufficient to note that these strange forms given to the deities by

the Assyrians were the forms of constellations of stars as the Assyrians were well advanced in astronomical science.

In the Puranas we come across ten forms or avatars of Shri Krishna Bhagvan (we have also ten forms in the **The Puranic Deities.** Avesta of Beherām Yazad). The Hindus make idols corresponding to these ten forms, place them in temples, and worship them. These idols represent creatures half-man half-whale, or half-man half-lion, or half-man half-boar, half-man half-tortoise. These avatars of the Puranas have no connection with the Yazads of the Avesta. The only parallelism that can be drawn is between the Avestan Yazads and the deities of the *Vedas*. The rock carvings of the Iranians were made centuries after the composition of the Avesta, and the Puranas in India were written centuries after the date of these carvings, and between the Puranic avatars and the carvings on the rocks there is a world of difference in aim and purpose. The *Dabestān* describes similar idols of strange creatures, they are pictures of the seven planets, but they have no resemblance to the Achaemenian carvings on the rocks. The description in the *Dabestān* seems to be influenced by the description of the ten Avatars of Shri Krishna.

We have already shown elsewhere that the sky was represented by the Avestan poets as the palace or abode of the

The Abodes of the Yazads—The Assemblies of the Yazads. Yazads, and that this allegorical description gave rise in later times to the practice of erecting separate temples for each of the Yazads and placing idols of these Yazads for the benefit of worshippers. Now Astronomy is familiar with the twelve divisions to which all constellations of stars are assigned, and these divisions are known as Zodiacal signs or abodes, in which the different stars and planets are found to be moving. We have a corresponding description of the heavenly abode of the Yazads in the Avesta. Thus we are told in the Yeshts about Meher, Srosh, Rashmu,

Tir, Anāhita, Chista, and other Yazads and Amshaspands, that they have their "Vaedhayan", their "Maeyan," i.e., their palace, nmāna, "i.e., their abode, and their "Havāyaon", Sanskrit "Svayaoni," i.e., the home of the deities. All these are the appointed positions in the sky of the different constellations. The heavenly paths of these Yazads are known as "Pathan" or "Pāntān".

We have also in the Avesta references to a heavenly assembly (vyākhma hanjaman) of the Yazads and Amshaspands. We are told in the Gahe Rapithvan "we praise and worship this assembly and Anjuman of the Amshaspands". Sraosh Yazad after his victory over his enemies is said to have proceeded towards this assembly of the Amshaspands (Yasna 57,12). The fire called "Urvājista" is said to have been a member of an assembly (Fravardin Yesht 85). Nairyao sangha is characterised in the Vendidad as one who graces the Anjuman by his presence, and also as one who brings together a big assemblage. Meher Yazad is similarly spoken of as a member of an assembly (Meher Yesht 61). He is also proclaimed to be the president of this assembly (Uyākhanām vyākhano), (Meher Yesht 65). These descriptions of the assembly of the Yazads and Amshaspands, of its president and members, remind us of the constellations of stars and planets.

We are also told of the friendship of the Yazads and Amshaspands (hakhaya) and other members of the assembly which is indicative of the close connection between Yazads and other powers in this or that constellation. Meher Yesht (51) speaks of the friendship

The Friendships of the Yazads.

between Khorshed Yazad and the Amshaspands. These Amshaspands could only mean the planets connected with the Solar System. The six Amshaspands from Behaman to Amardad or seven including Ahura Mazda are not so much spiritual entities as the planetary bodies that form part of the Solar System. We have clear indications in the Avesta of the meaning underlying the idea of the friendship of the

Amshaspands and the Sun. Thus we are told that in the process by which the light of the Sun and the Moon reaches the earth hundreds and thousands of Yazads and Amshaspands take a part. As ether and the atmosphere play a part in spreading light from a scientific point of view, so in the Avesta "Rām" and "Vayu" play this part.

These are natural agents engaged in the production of light. Meher is the element corresponding to light, and Ram is ether. "Vayu" is wind and "Thwāsha" is the atmosphere. We can thus understand the reason for assigning importance to the part played by the Amshaspands and the Yazads in spreading light over the earth. Rām, Ashi, Asmān, Mārespand and Anerān are not to be regarded as the names of five Yazads. They are in truth natural elements co-operating in producing the phenomena of light. Thus for instance Meher is recognised as a spiritual Yazad (Meher Yesht 13)—"Mainyava Yazata". Meher Yesht 105 associates with Meher other Yazads as spiritual entities (Mithraschita mainlyava"). The Khurshed Yesht describes in appreciative terms the friendship of the Sun and the Moon. Science has taught us that the Moon and various other bodies shine not with their own lights but with borrowed lights. We can thus understand the allegorical description of the friendship between these two bodies and other planets. As the Moon shines with the borrowed light of the Sun ("Yatha māongho hvāraoshno"),¹ we are told that Meher causes his body to glimmer (with the light of the Sun), ("Yatha tanum raochayeiti). It shines with the brilliancy of Tir ("yenghāo ainiks brājaiti Yatha tishtryo stārahe") "whose chariot is caught up first, O Spitama by him who borrows his light from the Sun ("hubāmya"),

¹ The translators of this expression "hvāraokhshna" have taken it to be another form of "Khā-raokhshna," that is, "shining of its own light." I would derive it from "hvāraokhshna", the middle "ra" having been dropped, and it may be compared with "hubāmya" occurring in the same passage. I take it to mean "that which obtains light from the Sun", or "shining with the light of the sun", a meaning which is borne out by facts.

by him who is never deceived by the most brilliant creations" ("yatha dāmān sraoshtaish") Meher Yesht 5. The descriptions thus given in the Zoroastrian Scriptures are borne out by the revelations of Science in our own times. Similarly we have a vague reference to unknown friends in Sarosh Hādokht, where there is an evident reference to constellations to which Meher, Sarosh, Rashnu, Govād, Ashishvanga, Astād, and other Yazads belong. Meher Yesht 45 speaks of eight friends of Meher. Even according to the description in the Avesta these friends are the followers of Meher who have their own paths in the heavens and they are called by the names of Ashishvanga, Pārendi, Nairehamvareti, Kyāni Khureh, the Fravashis, Thwāsha, Dāmi-Upaman, and the organiser of the assembly of all holy Mazdyas-nians (Nairyosangha),¹ (Meher Yesht 66). These eight friends are also described as keeping a keen eye on all who displease Meher, and on all evil-minded persons who are liable to break their promises (Meher Yesht 45). As they are Yazads presiding over the light of material bodies moving in the skies, so they are also spoken of as Yazads presiding over special moral virtues. Besides these eight friends, Rashnu and Beherām have been spoken of as the special friends of Meher (Meher Yesht 79-80).

We have attempted in this article, as will be seen, to identify a few of the Yazads with planets and other stellar

Concluding Reflections. bodies the planets and the stars with their regular movements have been spoken of as the Yazads, the revolving sky as the chariot of the Yazads, the

forces with the help of which they perform their movements as the horses of the Yazads. The Yazads are described as fighting with those forces that counteract their uniform movements, and these forces

¹ In the Vendidad we have described to us the connection of Nairyosangha with the assembly of holy persons. Vendidad XIX, 34, speaks of Nairyosangha as a messenger who brings the commands of Ahura Mazda to the souls of the good in the heavenly assembly. Meher Yesht 52 describes Nairyosangha as riding a chariot along with Meher Yazad, in other words, as moving on his appointed path in the heavens.

underlying the uniform movements themselves are characterised as armies or as arms of various kinds. The stellar bodies and their constellations are pictured as animals with various forms, the signs of the Zodiac as the abode of the Yazads, the Solar System and other systems as the assembly of the Yazads. Some of them are spoken of as members of the Assembly, others as presidents, and the relations between different constellations as friendship between the Yazads. These descriptions bear witness to the insight into astronomical phenomena of the scholars who wrote the Avestan Texts. European scholars as well as scholars in the East have often dismissed these descriptions of the Avesta as simple poetical allegories without any attempt at understanding their significance. So far as I know this has been the first attempt at an interpretation which brings out the astronomical significance of these descriptions. So far our interpretation of the Avesta has been confined within a strictly philological sphere tracing the meaning of words through changes in their form. There is still a vast field for research and investigation, which may bring to light the wisdom and knowledge contained in our sacred literature. The writings bearing on these astronomical facts which we have endeavoured to indicate must have been composed at a particular epoch ¹ of history. The collection of writings known as the Avesta

1 After the end of the reign of the Kyānian Monarch Gushtasp, an Iranian tribe seems to have invaded Babylon and to have conquered Chaldaea. The historian Barosus speaks of two centuries of the rule of the followers of Zoroaster in Chaldaea where eight chief priests are said to have succeeded one another as rulers under the name of "Zarathushtrotēmō." If this statement can be relied on, it may well be that after the overthrow of the Kyānian rule and before the commencement of the Assyrian domination Zoroastrian scholars in Chaldaea may have acquired and completed their knowledge of Astronomy which subsequently found its way into the Yeshts. Chaldaea was at one time the seat of astronomical learning and astronomical knowledge had spread from Chaldaea to Assyria, Rome, and Greece. The Chaldaeans were thus advanced in astronomical Science, and they were also familiar with the worship of the Heavenly Yazads as it prevailed amongst the Mazdyasnians. It is thus easy to understand the connection between the Yazads worshipped by the Mazdyasnians and the recently acquired knowledge of astronomical phenomena.

was composed at different times by different hands. Knowledge of astronomical facts is not found uniformly in all parts of the Avesta. It is especially found in the Yeshts where it is intimately associated with profound moral teaching. The Yeshts belong, as regards their composition, to the latest period, with the result that it is in them that we find Iranian scholars embodying their astronomical knowledge. This knowledge is conveyed in a poetic garb, and their importance emphasised by giving to it a religious imprint. The poets have made vague references to the influence on our material world of the stars and planets and their movements. These movements have been characterised as the march of armies, and the various forms which the constellations assume described as so many different forms of animals. The gifts and bounties of these spirits that preside over material and spiritual life are simply the imperceptible influences of the stellar bodies on this material world of ours. We profit by these gifts and we are all indebted for them to the author of all bounties, Ahura Mazda. The seeds of astronomical knowledge thus sown by the authors of the later Avestan writings did not, however, fructify. The ages that followed lost touch with astronomical science. The allegories were taken literally, and gave rise to idol-worship. The allegorical descriptions by the Avestan poets of the stellar constellations were in later times interpreted as descriptions of strange animals, whose forms were translated into stones, and which became the objects of reverence for the masses. And this idol-worship was confirmed and strengthened by contact with neighbouring communities who had long been accustomed to the worship of human forms in stone.

Though our earliest Aryan ancestors had never been proficient in the art of carving on stones or rocks, the Iranians of later days had learnt this art of carving images and inscriptions from neighbouring non-Zoroastrian communities like the Assyrians, the Egyptians, and the Babylonians. Though this art had led these neighbouring

communities to idol-worship, there can be no doubt that amongst the Iranians this art was employed in the first instance in glorifying the beauties of the stellar lights, and the bounties of a Creator who was the author of these lights. The early Iranians looked upon these products of creative art as symbols of the powers behind them, and there is nothing in the shape of historical evidence to indicate that in the earlier days these poetic creations in stone on the rocks and palaces were worshipped, or that images of this type were associated in any way with their prayers, or were placed in their prayer-halls. In later times, however it appears that two of the Achaemenian monarchs had employed sculptors in making images of Yazads like Meher, Anahita, and others, had placed these images in their halls of prayer, and encouraged their worship. History does not give us any indication as to the detailed structure of these images. It may be noticed, however, that the Iranians excelled the Assyrians and other neighbouring communities in so far as the genius of their sculptors was manifested in the handling of stone and rocks, whereas the Assyrians and the Egyptians worked with brick and mortar.

The art of sculpture and engraving in stone seems to have been brought to Iran under the rule of the Achaemides, and to have been fostered by the encouragement of the monarchs themselves. This art of carving in stone assumed two forms, one was that of carving inscriptions in stone, and the other that of carving images and designs of all kinds. The Achaemenian Monarchs were far-sighted enough to understand the desirability of preserving the memories of great political events by inscriptions in stone. It was necessary that the forms of the letters and signs used in these inscriptions should be as simple as possible as they had to be carved in stone, and these signs became known in later times as the cuneiform language. The pictures and designs associated with these inscriptions were also of two kinds. There were carvings in stone of various kinds of animals and

political events, and there were also carvings of stellar phenomena and heavenly bodies. The Achaemenian sculptors frequently made statues of different kinds of animals, and as a result they were tempted into making statues and images of the heavenly Yazads. Cyrus and Xerxes seem to have welcomed this activity of the Iranian artists, and the practice soon arose of organising during war processions of chariots with images of Yazads seated by them, thus sowing the seeds of idol-worship. Upto this time the places of prayers amongst the Parsis were exempt from any taint of idol-worship. But even these were soon affected by the example of neighbouring nations, and two of the later Achaemenian monarchs, Ardeshir II, and Darab III, facilitated the spread of idol-worship by introducing the images of different Yazads into different places of worship. The famous monarchs of the Achaemenian dynasty had at one time made Europe and Asia alike tremble at their name by their power and influence. They had glorified the name of Parsis in distant lands, and in this work they had employed all their resources, their wealth, and their power, and yet all these services were overshadowed by the idol-worship and superstitious demonology which they had encouraged. The memory of their deeds was partially preserved in Greek history and in the writings of the Jews and other communities. But the great Parsi monarchs who belonged to the Sassanide dynasty, and who had spent considerable energy and all their wealth in bringing together the historical materials relating to their famous predecessors consciously or unconsciously remained indifferent to the work and the achievements of the Achaemenian monarchs. It was left to the European travellers of a later day to bring to the notice of the world the greatness of their achievements, and we Parsis are under an immense debt of obligation to these enterprising Western Scholars. Barring their undesirable encouragement of idol-worship these Achaemenian monarchs were true Zoroastrians in other respects. The devil-worship which they encouraged appears to have begun about 558 B. C., to

have spread over the entire land about 404 B. C., and to have come to an end with the establishment of Sassanian rule in 226 B. C.

With the rule of the Sassanides began a brighter era for the country. Ardashir Babakan planned out a comprehensive scheme for the progress and advancement of his subjects, and carried it out to a large extent with the help of the resources at his command. He applied himself in the first instance to the work of eradicating all elements of demon-worship from the Zoroastrian Religion, and lifted his subjects out of the ignorance into which they had been plunged by his encouragement of arts and industries. He built Atesh-Beherâms as memorials of his great political and religious achievements, and he also appears to have encouraged the formation of new settlements in the lands under his command. In the building of the Atesh-Beherâms he had two or three ends in view. One of these was to consolidate and unify the communities under common political and religious institutions. Another object that he might have had in view, might have been to lift his subjects into the light of knowledge, and to show them the way to a better life by destroying all elements of devil-worship. These Atesh-Beherâms were places where fire was made an object of reverence as a symbol of the light that dissipates physical, moral, and spiritual darkness. The fire represents, on the one hand, the knowledge of arts and industries, which delivers men from ignorance and intellectual stagnation, and on the other hand the moral insight which promotes the spiritual welfare of men. But it is a symbol only, and anyone who worships any material element may be regarded as a sinner.

DIVISION OF TIME IN THE AGE OF THE YASNA THE THIRTY-THREE RATUS.

“Nivaedhyemi Hankāryemi vispaeibyo aeibyo rutbyo yoi henti
ashāhe ratavo thrayascha thrisānscha mizadishta pairish-hāyanayo
yoi henti ashāhe yat vahishtahe Mazdo-frasāsta Zarathushtro
frakhta.

“I announce and proclaim all these Ratus and prepare for a sacrifice these as also the requisites of ritual. They are the 33 Ratus of righteousness who come close to “hāvane (“Gāh”) masters of righteousness taught by Mazda and proclaimed by Zarathushtra”. (Yasna 8,1).

In this paragraph of the Yasna there is a description of the division of time according to the latest reformed methods of the age. The solar year of 365 days is divided here into days and months. The day is further sub-divided into five parts, each part being known as “Ratu.” In the Avesta we find the word “Ratu” used in different senses. One of these resembles the Sanskrit “ऋत्”, and conveys the idea of season, time, climatic periods, etc : We shall here use the Persian equivalent “Gāh” to indicate the meaning.

The second of the five Gāhs is known as “Hāvani”. The reason for the importance attached to “Hāvani” in the passage under consideration is to be found in the importance attached to the Homa ceremony (Soma ceremony) in the Yasna. In the early days the Homa ceremony was held in the greatest honour amongst the Hindu Saints and the Mazdyasnians Shaoshyants. Both amongst the Brahmins and Zoroastrians special times were appointed for the ceremony, and there is a remarkable parallelism in the names associated with the ceremony in Sanskrit and Avesta.

These times for the ceremony have been called the three "Savans", which corresponds to the Avestan "havan". Amongst the Zoroastrians also we find three such "havans", and Dr. Haug long ago pointed in the Yasna evidence of two out of these three "havans", the first being called "Fratar havan" and the second "Upar havan", (Yasna 10,2). The latter has been called by our Mobeds the ceremony of straining the juice of "homa". The reason for this reference to two havans is that the ceremony is exclusively associated with the Yasna. The first of them is associated with the commencement of the Yasna, the second occurs in connection with Yasna 27. The third havan (that of straining the juice of homa) has no relation with the Yasna, with the result that we find no reference to it in the Yasna. This third havan occurs before sunset in connection with the ceremony of the Vendidad, and it is especially associated with the ceremony known as "Nirange Din". The parallelism between the three havans and the three Savans of the Brahmins bears witness to the racial affinities between the Parsis and the Hindus.

Associated with the ceremonies of Yasna is the ceremony of straining the homa juice in the day time and from the latter is derived its importance, and one can understand the meaning of "havani" or "the time for straining the homa juice". The 33 Ratus or Chiefs, who are said to be close to "havani" in Yasna 1,10, can only be understood in connection with the Hâvani Gâh. Round about Hâvani are four other Gâhs whose names are to be found in the Yasna. These five Gâhs are the five divisons of the day, and it is these divisons of the day that can throw light on the 33 Ratus, and also on the connection between these divisions of the day and the Hâvani Gâh.

Corresponding to the divisions of the day in the Yasna are to be found divisions of the month and the year, and the paragraph we have already spoken of (1, 10) which makes a reference to the 33 Ratus, follows on these divisions. I believe that the object of the writer of Yasna 1, 10, must have been to connect these 33 Ratus with the month and the year as much as with the day. Ervad Sheriarji has compared the word "Hāvan" with Sanskrit "Sāvan", and takes it to mean the Solar year, and thus arrives at 33 divisions of the year. Now in the Vedas the word "Sāvan" is used not only with the year but in connection with the month and the day. And as in the Avesta importance is attached to the time of the "Hāvani", so the Vedic "Sāvan" is regarded as most important in connection with the divisions of time. Thus the word "Hāvani" must have been used in the passage under consideration in connection with the Ratus of the year, the month, and the day. Thus if there are 33 Ratus of the day, the month, and the year, the Ratus of the year, the month and the day must be closely inter-connected.

This is what I find in reference to the description of the Ratus in the Avestan Books. We find in the Avesta three classes of Ratus, "Anya" = "Divisions of the day", "Māhya" = "Divisions of the month", "Yāiryā" = "Divisions of the ordinary year", and along with these "Saredh" = "Divisions of the solar year".

Though we find this passage in the Yasna and in Vispered, we do not find a uniform account of the division of the year into 33 Ratus. In the Yasna we find the full complement of 33 Ratus in connection with the month and the days, but with regard to the year and its seasons we only find six names. Further as regards the solar year, we only come across the name "Saredh", there is no reference to its sub-divisions.

Though the Vispered mentions the full complement of the Ratus of the month and the day, we have reason to believe that the passage of the Vispered does not belong to the original text, but is an interpolation of the passage by some later hand of Yasna 1, 10. We know that interspersed between the Hâs of the Yasna are portions of the Vispered. The reason why there is no reference to the 33 Ratus of the year in Yasna is that the passage in question forms part of a common everyday ritual. We must therefore look beyond the Yasna in search of the Ratus of the year. The Vispered is known to be associated with an annual ritual, and the Ratus of the year which we fail to discover in the Yasna we find mentioned in their full complement in the Vispered. It must be noted, as we shall point out again later on, that in the division of the Ratus of the year no account is taken of the sub-divisions of the month and the day. So also in the Ratus of the month no reference occurs to the sub-divisions of the year and the day, and in the Ratus of the day there is no mention of the sub-divisions of the year and the month. There are a few exceptions in the case of some sub-divisions of Ratus. Most of these latter are distinct and while it is possible to understand the inter-relations of some of them, others present difficulties, and it is even difficult to understand how the number 33 was arrived at.

We find a description of the divisions of the day in a passage of the Yasna which forms part of a daily prayer.

The 33 Ratus of the Day. This description includes the five divisions of the day known as "Gâhs" and their names, also the names of the patrons or guardians who preserve order in these divisions and the names of the corresponding yazads.

3. Sāvanghi.	14. Dakhyum.	25. Beherām.
4. Visya.	15. Apām-napāt.	26. Vanainti-uparatāt.
5. Meher ¹ .	16. Avān.	27. Ushahin.
6. Rām ¹ .	17. Aivisruthrem.	28. Berejaya.
7. Rapithwin.	18. Aibigaya ² .	29. Nmānya.
8. Frādat Fshu.	19. Frādat-Vispām Hujuāiti.	30. Sraosh.
9. Zantum.	20. Zarathushtremo.	31. Rashnu.
10. Ardibehesht.	21. Fravashyo.	32. Ashtārt.
11. Adar.	22. Genāo.	33. The Ratu of the day on which the Yasna is being recited.
12. Uzayeirin.	23. Yāiryā ³ .	
13. Frādat-vir.	24. Am.	

The Ratus of the month include two fortnights of fifteen days each, and the names of the three other Ratus, as
The 33 Ratus of the Month.

1. Māhya, relating to the month.
1. Andarmāh, the Ratu of the first half of the month,
15. The 15 days of the first half of the lunar month.
1. Purmāh Vishtpath, the Ratu of the second half of the month.
15. The 15 days of the second half of the lunar month. Compare
“Panchdas māo nerefsaiti”

1. References to the close connection between the Yazads and the divisions of time are often met with in the Avesta (Yasna 2, and 6, 20.)

2. In the Gāhe Aivisruthrem, “Aibigaya” has been recognised as a special Ratu.
 3. Just as amongst the Ratus of the month we find “Māhya” referred to, and amongst the Ratus of the year “Yāiryā” and “Saredh” are encountered, so in the Khashnuman of the Yasna as well as at the end of the Yasna we find a reference to “Ayar” – “day”, and “Asnya” = “Divisions of the day.”

We do not find here the precise number of days of the first and second half of the lunar month.

The number 15 occurs, but not the names of the days.

The Gathic passage “ke yâ mao ukshyeiti nerefsaiti thwat.” does not mention the precise number of days corresponding to the division noted above.

In all these cases it is left to common sense to determine the days and their numbers. We find in Yasna 16 a reference to the thirty days of the month and their names. The month is divided into four weeks, and the names of the thirty days used in our prayers are evidently derived from this source. But though we find in the Avesta the names of the thirty days mentioned in serial order, we do not find the twelve months of the year mentioned in any serial order, which evidently leads us to conjecture that the twelve months of the year may not have been included in the 33 Ratus of the year. We find the names of six months in the Afringâne Gâhâmbâr corresponding to the seasonal jashans so also in the Yasna and other Avestan writings we find an injunction to mention the names of the month in the course of prayers. There can thus be no room for doubt that the names of the twelve months of the year were specifically determined in the earliest Avestan period.

We find the Ratus of the year mentioned in serial order in the **The 33 Ratus of the year.** Vispered, also the names of the Gâhâmbârs, also the names of the five days which are to be added at the end of the year to complete the Solar year (that is, the names of the Gâthâs), the names of certain prayers dedicated to some intercalary days, and finally the names of all varieties of things created by God both corporeal and spiritual connected with these days (ratavo mainlyavanâm ratamo gaethanâm), and the names of the Ratus associated with them.

Yâiryâ.	Vohukhsbathra Mithra Râm ¹ .
Maidhyozarem.	Vahishtâishti.
Maidhyoshaem.	Dahma âfriti.
Paitishahya.	Dahma Nar.
Ayâthrim.	Dâmi Upaman.
Maidhyâiryâ	Airyaman Ishya.
Hamaspathmaedhya.	Fshush Mânthra ² .
Staota Yasna.	Hadhaokhta ² .
Saredh.	Ahuiiri Frashna ³ .
Ahunavairyâ.	
Ashem.	
Yenghehâtâm.	
Ahunavaiti.	
Genâo.	
Ahumat Ratumat.	
Yasna Haptanghâiti.	
Ardhvi (= Anâhit).	
Ushtavaiti.	
Gairi.	
Spentâmainyu.	
Verethraghna.	
Vanainti-Uparatât.	

The names of these 33 Ratus must have been determined by some special reason into which we have no complete insight. It is the number 33 which is of interest to us, not the names of the individual Ratus, with regard to whom there is still room for research by scholars.

1. These Ratus are also found amongst the Ratus of the days, because they are sub-divisions of the Ratus themselves. Thus in the Ratu of the day "Gâhe Havani" we find, as sub-divisions, the Ratus "Mithra" and "Râm". And in the Ratu "Vohu Khshathra", which belongs to the year we have as sub-divisions the same "Mithra" and "Ram".

2. Though "fshush mânthra" and "Hadhaokhta" are not written separately, they have been regarded as separate Ratus like "Aibigaya", a Ratu of the day.

3. The second sentence of Yasna 1, 9, is not connected with the description of the Ratus, because we do not encounter in it the words "ashaono ashabe rathwo".

Ervad Sheriarji after very careful investigation into the question has divided the year under five heads into "Ayar", "Asnya", "Mahya", "Yairya", and "Saredh", and concludes that the 33 Ratus may be assigned in the following manner to these five divisions :

1. Under "Asnya" we have the five sub-divisions "Ushahin", Havan", "Rapithwin", "Uzayeirin", "Aivisruthrem".
2. Under "Mahya" we have "antaremāh", "perenomāh", and "Vishtpath".
3. Under "Yairya" we have the six sub-divisions "Maidhyozarem", "Maidhyoshaem", "Paitishahma", "Ayāthrim", "Maidhyāiryā", and "Hamaspathmaedhya".
4. Under "Saredh" we have the ten days of Fravardegān.
5. Under "Ayar" we have the nine Jashans, "Dae Dādāi Ahurmazd", "Bahaman", "Ardibahesht", "Sheherevar", "Spandarmad", "Khurdād", "Amardād", "Geush-tashan", "Geush-Urvan" ("Gosh") and "Adar".¹

The late Mr. K. R. Cama gives us the list of the Ratus as follows, made up of twelve Ratus of Yasna 1, and twenty-one Ratus of Vispered I : Ushahin, Havan, Rapithwin, Uzayeirin, Aivisruthrem, Nmānya, Visya, Zantum, Dakhyum, Zarathrushtrem, Andarmāh, Purmāh, Maidhyozarem, Maidhyoshem, Paitishahya, Ayāthrim, Maidhyāiryā, Hamaspathermaedhya, Staota-Yasna, Ahunavairya, Ashavahishta, Yenghe-hatām, Ahunavad, Ushtavad, Spentomad, Vohu Khshathra, Vahistoisht, Dahma afriti, Airyemā ishyo, Fshusho-Mānthra, Hādokh t, Ahuireshni.

M. Anquetil du Perron and Prof : Harlez understand the Ratus to be names of all the requisites which are used in the ceremonial of the Yasna, whereas other European scholars have associated the Ratus with divisions of time.

1. See files of the Rest Goftar from the 29th of October to the 26th of November 1905.

Ervad Rustomji Jamaji Meherji Rana gives us the following list of the 33 Ratus :

1. Ahurmazd.	12. Frādat-Fshu.	23. Andarmāh.
2. Bahaman.	13. Ashavahishta.	24. Purmāh.
3. Ardibehesht	14. Uzayeirin.	25. Vishtpathmāh.
4. Sheherevar.	15. Frādat-Vir.	26. Madhyozarem.
5. Aspandārmad	16. Bere Zato.	27. Madhyoshem.
6. Khurdād.	17. Aivisruthrem.	28. Peteshem.
7. Amardād.	18. Frādat-Vispām- Huhyāiti.	29. Ayāthrem.
8. Hāvan.	19. Ashonām- Fravashinām	30. Medhyārem.
9. Sāvangh.	20. Ushahin.	31. Hamaspeth- medem.
10. Meher.	21. Berejya.	32. Saredh.
11. Rapithavan.	22. Sraosh.	33. The day on which the Yasna cere- mony is to be performed ² .

We have so far cited the opinions of a number of scholars. No satisfactory solution of the problem has yet been offered, and there is room enough for further research work on the part of scholars. We believe some light on the question may be obtained from a careful consideration of three words which occur in Yasna 1, 10. These are the words "Ratu", "Thrayascha Thrisānscha", "Hāvani". The following observations which I offer in connection with the changes in meaning which these three words have undergone will be of interest to scholars.

With regard to the word "Ratu" we have hitherto taken it to indicate a division of time and the name of the **The Vishtasp Yesht.** Yazad presiding over that division, corresponding

2. Rivayat of Dastur Darab Hamajiar, P: 56.

to the meaning of the Sanskrit “ रातु ”. But there is another meaning which attaches to the word “ Ratu ” corresponding to the Pahlavi Persian “ Rad ”, viz.; “ a chief ”. In one place in the Avesta the 33 Ratus have been characterised as 33 chiefs or leaders. This passage which occurs in the Vishtâsp Yesht deserves consideration. Here a third person offers prayers for King Gushtasp in the name of Zarathushtra commencing with the words “ Dahmo Ahmi Afrivachâo ”.

This passage stands as an exception amongst the passages which bear on prayers in the Avesta.

The passage in question is not written by a competent hand. Its language is faulty, and it contains a number of interpolations of words, sentences, and passages from other parts of the Avesta. It must have been written at a time when people had lost living touch with the Avestan language. We find in this passage the names of a number of Ratus or chiefs, and immediately following occur the words “ *yoi henti ashahe ratavo thrayascha thrisânscha nazdisht pairishâvanayo.* ” In a following paragraph the Ratus have the adjective “ *thrâtotemo* ” applied to them which means “ give complete protection ”, an appropriate adjective for the Ratus mentioned here. Though we do not discover in this passage (14-18) the complete list of 33 chiefs (we have only 20 mentioned), evidently the author intended to indicate the full complement of 33 chiefs. The 20 names are as follows : Ahurmazd, Sarosh, the Mazdayasni Din, Hâvanân, Atarevakhsh, Frabaretar, Aberet, Asnâtar Rathwishkar, Sraoshâvarez, Mânpat, Vispat, Zandpat, Dehpat, a pious youth, a youth conversant with the Scriptures, Khaetvadath, Danghâurvis, Humâya Pairijathna, and the house-wife.

Though we do not find the complete list of the 33 chiefs in the Vispered. Vistâsp Yesht we can obtain this list from other sources, especially from Vispered III, from which evidently the writer of the passage in the Vishtâsp Yesht borrowed his

list. Vispered III, 1-5, contains a complete list of these chiefs. The author of Vishtasp Yesht was very negligent in his work of making out a list of the chiefs of the Religion. That he was evidently thinking of the chiefs of the Religion is clear from the use of the specific number indicated by "thrayascha thrisānscha". His negligence is evidenced by his omission from the list of those who are mentioned in the Vispered as twice approved by their bravery, heroism, and power exercised on behalf of the Mazdayasian Religion, viz : "Athonnān", "Ratheshtār", and "Vāstrayosh". With the help of the Vispered I endeavour to make up a complete list of the chiefs as follows :

The 33 Chiefs of the Religion.

The seven Mōbeds Connected with the Ritual,	Hāvanān.	The seven Anshashpands ¹ .	Ahurmazd.
	Antarevakhsh.		Beheman.
	Frabaretar.		Ardibehesht.
	Aberet.		Sheherevar.
	Asnātar.		Spandārmad.
	Rathwishkar.		Khordād.
	Sraoshāvarez.		Amardad.
The three Protectors,	Athonnān.	The Prophets.	The Saoshyants.
	Ratheshtār.		
	Vāstrayosh.		
The four organisers of the divisions of the day.	Mānpad.	Three names added to make up the list.	Athonnān.
	Vispad.		Ratheshtār.
	Zandpad.		Vāstrayosh.
	Dehpad.		

i. C: Yoi haptā ameshāspentā hukhshthrā hudhāongho.

Eight Righteous People	Yavanukhhdhavachangh.
	Khaetvadath.
	Danghauvis.
	Humāya Pairijathna.
	Nmān-pathni.
	A Rightous woman.
	A Righteous man.

In this list we have the names of the Amshaspands as well as the names of chiefs in this corporeal world of ours. Amongst the latter Zarathushtra is not given the first place, but is only included amongst the Saoshyants.

Of the 33 chiefs referred to in the Vispered we find the names of 22 in the Ujiran and the Aivisruthrem Gâhs. In **Aivisruthrem Gâh.** the Ujiran Gâh we find the names of the seven officiating Mobeds (eight, if we include the Joti), and the names of fifteen other chiefs are to be found in the Aivisruthrem Gâh. And the list of 33 is made up by the names of 18 other chiefs derived from other sources. I cannot account for the occurrence in this list of names connected with the instruments of the ceremonials, and it may also be noted that the names of Zarathushtra and his successors, the Zarathushtrotemo, occur twice. The list is as follows : Aivisruthrem, Aibigaya, Atash, Asman Hâvan, Ayanghaen Hâvan, Zor, Aivyâonghan, Baresman. Ap, Urvar, Urvan, Frâdat-Vispâm-Hujiyâiti, Zarathushtra, Mânthra Spenta, Geush Urvan, Zarathushtrotemo, Zarathushtra, Athornân, Ratheshtâr, Vâstra-yosh, Mânpat, Zandpat, Dehpat, Yavan Humanangha, Yavan Ukhîdha Vachangh, Khaetvadath, Danghâurvis, Humāya Pairijathna, Nmān, Pathni, A righteous woman, A righteous man, and Zarathushtrotemo.

We find in this list 8 names of instruments connected with the ceremonial. Subsequently these 8 names evolved into 33, due to the misreading of a Pahlavi word. We have already come across the word "Hâvani", the name of the second out of the five Gâhs. We have in the Avesta "Hâvan", which is the name of a familiar instrument associated with the ceremonial, viz : a mortar and pounder. These two Avestan-

words are written in Pahlavi in one and the same form of letters, so that the word could be read on both as "Hāvani" and "Hāvan". Lack of care in later times in reading the word led the Dasturs to interpret Yasna 1, 10, as meaning the 33 instruments of ceremonial close to "Hāvan" (mortar and pounder), and to maintain that there was a reference in this passage to all the requisite instruments of ceremonials. But these Dasturs have never been able to point out what these 33 instruments of ceremonial are. It is true that a few instruments of ceremonial are included in the list of Ratus in the Aivisruthrem Gāh ; and in other places in the Avesta such instruments of ritual have been characterised as Ratu. But all this can never justify the conjecture that these instruments are 33 in number, that in Yasna 1, 10 the reference is to these instruments of ritual.

Thus the original object of the author of the Yasna to give an account of the sub-divisions of time under the name

Conclusion.

of Ratus has disappeared in later times. Vispered III gives us a serial list of 33 chiefs, and the parallelism between this number and the number of Ratus led to the attempt in the Vishtasp Yesht to identify the Ratus with the chiefs. The author of the Vishtasp Yesht never seems to have attended to the true meaning of the expression which he quotes in support of his own view, viz.; Nazadisht Pairish —hāvanayo" (= "proximate to the Hāvan Gāh"). The importance attached to the number 33 in the case of these chiefs led to the introduction into the list of 33 instruments of ceremonial to make up the list. We find this in the Aivisruthrem Gāh. Nay, more, in later days the names of the chiefs were entirely replaced by the 33 instruments of ceremonial, very largely due to the several readings of one and the same form of letters in the Pahlavi Script. Thus the Ratus which were originally divisions of time later on became chiefs of the Religion and were finally transformed into instruments of ceremonial.

THE WONDERS OF THE GOLDEN AGE OF JAMSHID

We find in the Vendidad the description of the beauties and wonders associated with the new settlement of Jamshid, but in the absence of historical and critical researches these descriptions have hitherto been treated as fanciful myth and romance. Vendidad II, 39-43, contain a systematic account of these wonders. We notice two characteristic features at the beginning and end of the second Fargard of the Vendidad, which is so important as a document throwing light on the history of those early times. This Fargard begins with an account of the manner in which the talented Jamshid organised this new settlement. And the end of this Fargard contains an account of the way in which nature seems to have cooperated in adding to the beauties of this wonderful settlement. We propose to inquire into the significance of these wonders in the light of the Avesta, and also of the Vedas and the Puranas. We shall then discuss these wonders in detail.

Khadhâtacha raochâo Stidhâtacha Vispa Angra raochâo uscha
usa raochayeiti aor à raochayeiti antarât. Hakeret

References in the Avesta. ji irikhtahe sadhayacha Vaenaite starascha mäoscha
havarecha. Tæcha ayare manyeinte yat yare. Chathvarestem aivigâmanâm..... usa zayeinte.

Dvaeibya hacha nerebya hu nar usazayeinte mithwan stricha
naiyascha. Yoi geush saredhanâm Ko avath daenâm mazdayasnâm
VibaratVishkaripta (Vendidad II, 40-42). Aat yamo
frashushta raochâo à Upa rapithwâm. Hu paiti adhvanem
(Vendidad II, 10). Upa taerem haraithyo berejo yat me aivito
urvisenti starascha mäoscha hvarecha (Rashnu yesht 25.) Aat
yamai Khshathräi nava-stojim henjasenti. Hanzagrem aivi gâmanâm
(Vendidad XVI, 20).

(1) "There were two Kinds of light in Varejamkard, the natural light shines there continuously, and the second

The meaning of these Passages. kind of light which was artificial was used in the inner parts of the Var. (2) There the Sun, the Moon, and the Stars rose and set only once in a

year (3) The inhabitants of the Var regarded the whole year as a single day. (According to the Puranas, the period of time which is counted as a year by men is only a single day of the Gods.

Taititarya Brahamana III, 9, XXII. 1; Manusmriti I, 67. (4) In the Var it took forty years for a child to be born of the union of man and woman (5) When a woman gave birth, she always gave birth to twins;

and this same remarkable characteristic was to be found amongst cattle and other animals. (6) The Mazdyasnian Din was spread in the Var by the bird Vishkariptan. (7) The Sun and the celestial bodies

rose not in the East but in the South. (In the Vedas we find two words used for "dawn", "upā", and "Dakhshinā", the latter of

which clearly indicates that the light of dawn and the appearance of celestial bodies takes place in the South). (8) There the Sun and the Stars revolve round the peak known by the name of Taer in the chain of the Alborz Mountains. (According to the Mahabharat the Sun, the Moon, and the Stars revolve from the left to the right round mount Sumeru). (9) King Jamshid ruled over the world for a

period of 900 to 1,000 years.

We have already noticed to some extent the light thrown by Hindu Scriptures on the beauties and wonders of

Their Significance. nature described in the Avesta, in connection with the Var of Jamshid. We shall notice on a later occasion the admirable work done by **Gangadhar Tilak** in gathering from different religious scriptures and traditions innumerable references to the changes in climate and to the movements of the stars and planets in the North Pole alluded to in

the Avesta. The one thing to which we draw attention on the present occasion is that whereas in the Hindu Shastras these references are scattered and mixed up with the ritual, in the Vendidad, the references are to be found collected together in a single passage arranged in a serial order. Two other references on the same subject are to be found in other passages in the Vendidad, and only one reference on the subject is met with outside the Vendidad. Physical Geography today bears witness to the truth of the wonders described in the Vendidad and in the Vedas. Travellers have pointed out to us that the North Pole is the seat of these wonders, the like of which are not seen in any other part of the earth. New light has been thrown by Science on some of them, and things which were once looked upon with suspicion as the product of myth and imagination have now been converted into geographical facts or events which happened long ago.

The first of these wonders of Var is a peculiar type of natural **Aurora Borealis.** light. We have descriptions of the beauties of this light in the works of all travellers to the North Pole, amongst other in the works of Prof: Warren and Dr. Nansen. This wonderful light is the Aurora Borealis, about which it is said that in the night this wonderful light appears ever to assume new forms, and draws all life towards it with a peculiar attraction. The light assumes wonderful colours which constantly keep changing, and hold the spectator entranced and awe-struck. This light is not due either to the Sun, or the Moon, or the Stars. If it had been due to any of the latter, no specific notice would have been necessary in the Vendidad. According to Dr. Nansen these lights are not the result of reflection like the colours of a rain-bow, but shine of themselves. As Mr. Palanji Desai says in his history, the light referred to in the Var of the Vendidad.

is characterised as " *Khadhāt* ", *i. e.*, not borrowed in any way, but shining of itself. We are also told by scientists that when these lights begin to appear, a sound is heard like the rustling of a silken dress, and the residents of Lapland report hearing crackling sounds like those of thunder.

The descriptions of travellers to the North Pole about this light may be compared to some extent with the descriptions of what is reported as a new and wonderful light in the Avestan writings. Numerous lights are referred to as different forms of Behesht. One of these is " *raokhshna garonmâna* ", and it means " the spot (or, Behesht) of the music of the lights." In the Meher Yesht the light of Meher Yazad is spoken of as endowed with the power of producing sounds. These sounds are referred to in the Gathas as " a kind of music ", the echoes of which reach the earth. It reminds us of the songs of angels in Shakespeare, of the music of the spheres in Pythagoras, and of the celestial songs of Byron. If as a matter of fact the Aurora Borealis is associated with the production of rustling or crackling sounds, we can well understand the association of this light with Paradise and the music of Paradise. In the commentary on the Vendidad this light is referred to as " *anagra raochang* ", *i. e.* as endless light, and elsewhere as " *Khadhāt* ", *i. e.*, shining of itself. The description of this light draws our attention to another subject, viz.; the Behesht (Paradise) of the ancient Aryans.

What is Behesht? The Zoroastrian Religion characterises the Behesht. element of light by assigning to it various degrees of Behesht. The highest of these is the light referred to in Vendidad II, 40 which is the highest Behesht for Zoroastrians. It is placed in contrast with darkness, " *anagratemang* " (Sanskrit

“Dirdhatamas”), *i.e.*, infinite darkness, and that is Hell. Between light and darkness is “misvāngātu”, that is, eternal Behesht, and it is characterised as “Khadhāt”. Following this distinction in lights, in later religious works starry bodies known as “Satar pāyā”, “Māhā pāyā”, and “Khorshed pāyā” are called Beheshts of different degrees and a comparision is instituted between these and the Zoroastrian trinity of “Humata, Hukhta Hurshta”. With these three Beheshts is placed, as even higher than these, the natural light of Vendidad II. 40, which is “Vahishta ahu”, *i.e.*, the Best Existence”, and this is Paradise (Behesht). Contrasted with it is “Achishta Ahu”, that is, the worst existence, Hell. Thus “light” in the Zoroastrian philosophy is associated with Paradise or Heaven, and it is graded according to the actions of men. In the Siroza we have the grades of “anagra raochang”, “raokhshna·garonmānd”, (the “garo demāna” of the Gathas), “misvān gātu” and “chinvato peretu”. The first Behesht is the natural light of Vendidad II. In the Rashnu Yesht we find a more elaborate gradation of Behesht, viz.; “Satar pāyā”, “Māhā pāyā”, “Khorshed pāyā”, “Vahishta Ahu”, “garonmāna”, and “hadhanā tansush” (?), (32-38). Yasna 16 describes the light of the Var as “yāhu iristanām urvāno shāyante”, *i.e.*, “in whom (that is, in the lights) the souls of the dead dwell”. This is one more piece of evidence in support of view that the light of the Var was characterised as the highest heaven, Behesht. If this light of the Var was the heaven of the north pole, we can locate the Var of Jamshid, which was called “Bage Behesht”, and whose residence enjoyed the blessings of heaven.

Can we derive “Aruna” of the Vedas from Avestan “Aurusha”? It is true that the Vedic “Aruna” has corresponding to it in the Avesta “Aruna” which has a different meaning, and the Avestan “Aurusha” has corresponding to it “Arusha” in Sanskrit. Nevertheless, the parallelism between Sanskrit “Aruna” and Avestan “Aurusha” is worth noticing. (1) “Aruna” is a bright light. So in the Avesta we find “Aurusha” associated with “raokhshna” which stands for light.

or brightness. (2) As "Aruna" is a celestial light, so, "Aurusha" in the Avesta is found qualifying celestial light, or celestial bodies (Yazads). (3) As "Aruna" manifests its beauty in the sky, so in the Avesta in describing the beauties of celestial bodies "Aurusha" is associated with "fráderesra", and also with "Srira". (4) Both these words have the same root in Avesta and Sanskrit; having the same meaning they are different forms based upon this root. (5) As "Aruna" manifests wonderful varieties of colour in the sky, so the word "Aurusha" in the Avesta is found in connection with the beauties of white and red and crimson colours.

The second of the wonders of Varejam Kard is the simultaneous rising and setting of the Sun, the Moon, and the stars.

The Second Wonder. Two strange Celestial Events. Why should the regular movements of celestial bodies, which attract no attention in our own times, have been regarded as something wonderful in the Vendidad?

The reason is evidently to be found in the fact that in the North Pole what we are familiar with as a day of twenty-four hours is unknown, the Sun does not rise and set as amongst us, and the whole starry heavens behave in a different and strange manner. According to a famous Hindu mathematical work, the Gods on Mount Sumeru keep on beholding the Sun for a period of six months, which evidently indicates the fact that in the North Pole the Sun does not set once in every twenty-four hours, but is to be seen in the sky for the long period of six months, and there is continuous light of day during this period. In the ensuing six months when the Sun has set, it is not to be seen at all, and thus there is complete darkness as of night in that period. There is a tradition amongst the Hindus that in a certain country the Devs sleep for six months, and keep awake during the other six months. The deities referred to in this tradition were neither Devs in other form nor giants, but the Sun, the Moon, and other celestial bodies. The tradition thus bears witness to the fact known in the Shashtras of the movements of celestial bodies in the North Pole. Thus the inhabitants

of the Var did not witness a sunset from day to day like ourselves, but saw the Sun rising and setting once in six months. This is what travellers see today in the North Pole confirming the description of this strange event as given in the Vendidad.

It may also be noticed that the miraculously beautiful lights of Aurora Borealis in the North Pole, are to be seen in the long night of six months illuminating the otherwise complete darkness. The darkness of this prolonged night is also relieved by the light of the Moon and the Stars; and though the Moon is below the horizon for a fortnight every month, the stars shed their light continuously. The Sun, the Moon, and the Stars regularly follow their own movements once in every twenty-four hours. The great dawn after the completion of the long night and the evening twilight before the commencement of that night is the light of Meher Yazad, which adds considerably to the beauties of Aurora Borealis. The Rishis of early India composed many a beautiful hymn in praise of these lights. Regveda VII, 76, tells us as to the number of days which elapsed between the first streak of light on the horizon before the dawn and the appearance of the Sun on the horizon. Thus the period of dawn and the period of the evening twilight in the North Pole are not so short as amongst us, but are prolonged over a month and a half to two months, and whilst they last, the light of Meher Yazad shines in all its beauty throwing into ecstasy all beholders by the variety of the beautiful colours which it gives to all objects.

Dr. Nansen tells us that the Aurora Borealis assumes various forms in the sky; sometimes the form of a lance, sometimes of a bow or an arrow, a circle, an arc, at other times of a round ball, and it is these very appearances that the poetic imagination of the composers of the Avesta, regarded as the lance or the bow and arrow, the club, and other arms of Meher Yazad (Meher Yesht 39-40). In characterising these appearances of the Aurora Borealis as the arms of Yazads, the poet must have had for his object the preservation of pure light and the fostering of the virtues which it represents.

The Third Wonder. The third wonder of the Var of Jamshid consists in regarding the year of 360 days as a single day. As amongst us the period of 24 hours during which the sun rises and sets once, so the inhabitants of the Var in the North Pole regarded as a single day the period (of a year) during which the sun and other celestial bodies rise and set only once. The period is divided into two parts, the first occupying six months, determined by the rising of the sun, and the second occupying another six months beginning with the setting of the sun. The two together constitute a single day of the Varejamkard. We who live in the tropics regard as one day the period of 24 hours between the rising of the Sun and its re-appearance again. In the North Pole, on the other hand, we have a single day prolonged over six months, and a single night occupying an equal period of time, with the result that what we regard as a year is amongst the inhabitants of the Var regarded as a single day.

The Fourth Wonder. The fourth wonder is indicated by the statement that it takes forty years for a child to be born after the union of man and wife. All along in this discussion, as the main topic, is the settlement of the Var all these wonders must evidently be connected with natural events and facts. We have already found reason to locate the Var of Jamshid in the North Pole. The tradition about the period of forty years being necessary for the birth of a child may be connected with the fine and health-giving climate of the Var, and the observation of sanitary principles. We shall also see later on that the settlement of the Var provided all the requisites of a happy life for the residents, and according to the Vendidad the people living there enjoyed a prolonged existence which might well have been characterised as immortal. The tradition about the period of forty years furnishes indirect evidence as to this long and happy life. It is a familiar fact that plants and other living animals produce fruits at a late period of maturity, and long after they have entered on life. So also amongst living beings and men the

climate has a direct influence on health of body and mind. The stunted growth and the relatively shorter span of life of men amongst us, are largely due to the enervating effects of climate, and it would not be strange if children under these conditions take a shorter period to come to maturity, and have weak and stunted bodies. Amongst the inhabitants of the Var we have the examples of Jamshid, Zohak, Faredoon, as men who attained to an extraordinary old age, so in later times Kersasp, Jal, Rustom and Sohrab must have been known for their imposing stature, their remarkable talents.

Thus the North Pole would appear to be the home of the primitive Aryans of the Var. The exact situation of this original home has not yet been determined. When it is determined by enterprising scholars we shall have new light on early history. The traditions about the longer average lives and the more imposing bodies of early Aryans have been, to some extent, made more probable by the discovery of the skeletons of monster animals and the skulls of human beings belonging to an age considerably earlier than the three thousand years to which our historical knowledge has hitherto been confined.

The fifth wonder of the Var is the uniform practice of giving birth to twins. We have to remember that these **The Fifth Wonder.** wonderful events are attributed to a period from which we are separated by seven to eight thousand years according to scholars. In judging about these wonders we have to take into account the time, the place, and the conditions, so different and remote from our own. According to the Bundahishn the first couple on earth was Mashya—**Mashyan.** From them were born other twins who spread their progeny on the earth. We find a reference in the same work to another couple known as Yama-Yamak. The latter reference has a parallel in the Riga-Veda. Mr. Palanji Desai tells us on the authority of a Hindu Pandit that as Yama found it undesirable that men should multiply by the union of couples who may be regarded as brother and sister,

he persuaded Yamak to look out for another man whom she could take as her husband, and determined himself to look out for another wife. This Yama is evidently the great Jamshed, who is so closely associated with the Var and its wonders, and who is credited with the introduction of very many reforms during his regime, and the story of Rigveda points to one such reform of an ethical character¹. The example of a pure and a good life set by Jamshid must have been followed by people who obeyed his authority. The twins who were born to Jamshid were known as Mirak, Jainak, and amongst their progeny are mentioned many other examples of the birth of twins. Amongst other things we find in the Bundahishn a reference to the Jabooli Hero Shameshver to whom were born three children at the same time, by name Damnak' Khusrov, and Margandak; and his seventh son was the famous Jalejar.

If we turn now to our own times the paucity of instances in which twins are born today stands in marked contrast with the usual phenomenon of the birth of twins in the earlier days. According to the Vendidad even the animals living in the Var usually give birth to twins. Today it is usual for animals to give birth to twins, and the same phenomenon is to be found in plant-life, and amongst less complex types of animal life. All this would make it unreasonable for us to throw doubts on the historicity of the account of the Vendidad in this connection.

1. According to the Vishvakarma Purana Vishvakarma had married his daughter Sanya Devi, to Suryadev, and to this couple were born twins Yama-Yamuna. The Devs gave Yama the title of the just protector of the people and Yamuna became the consort of Shri Krishna. When the daughter of Vishvakarma could not bear the glamour of Suryadev her father at her request lessened it. On its being divided the three parts of the divided brilliance were utilised in the formation of Vishnu's Wheel, of the trident of Shanker and the club of Indra.

This great Rishi was skilled in arts and industries. He is said to have built cities and palaces, fortresses and temples. Though he flourished in the Vedic times all the buildings and architectural works described in the Ramayan and Mahabharat have been ascribed to Vishvakarma. In this Puranic descripton we find a certain parallelism with Jamshid : (1) the birth of the twins Yama-Yamak, (2) the wish of Yama to marry Yamak to some desirable party, (3) to reveal to him the brilliancy of the sun light or "hoore-darshi" (4) The division of his Khoreh into three parts. (5) His settlement of the Varejamkard. (6) The association of the name of Jamshid with all the great events of later times.

Amongst the wonders of Varejamkard is the description of a bird called "Vishkariptan, who is said to have spread the **The Sixth Wonder—A Prophet in the Shape of a Bird** Mazdyasian Religion. The Pahlavi commentator of the Vendidad and the Bundahishn tell us: "It is said about the bird "Karashptan" that it was endowed with speech; that it had brought the Din to the cave of Jamshid, and in the places where its fame had spread people used the language of birds to recite the Avesta." This description reminds us of the Egyptian sphynx which is said to have spoken like men and to have propounded riddles. It used to devour all those who failed to solve its riddles. We are also reminded of a man called Akhtajadu in Iran who propounded riddles and destroyed those who failed to solve them. He was ultimately destroyed by one Goshtfryān who solved the riddle, overcame him, and thus saved the lives of many an innocent victim. According to the Shah-Namah, Rustom, Jal, and Sam entered into conversation with the ostrich who often succeeded in curing many of their ills. Firdausi thus looks upon the ostrich, as a curer of diseases familiar with the virtues of plants and drugs, very much as Greek mythology makes Chiron, an animal half man half horse, excel in music, medicine, surgery, and other arts; and as the ostrich advised heroes like Jal and Rustom Chiron could claim for his pupils heroes like Hercules.

Prof. Darmesteter endeavours to explain this mysterious description of the Var in the light of meteorology. He says that the lightning-like rapidity with which a bird sometimes flies through the air makes people give it the form of lightning itself, and as the thunder accompanying was called "the Voice of God coming from the sky," the Din announced by God for the benefit of men is said to be announced by the bird. Many have regarded the ostrich who protects the hero Rustom as a great sage. The sphynx of ancient Egypt was sometimes called a Titanic woman. The birds described in the Avesta

as Amru and Chamru are looked upon by some as eminent individuals: Greek historians have sometimes regarded the eagle that protected the Achaemenian rulers, and the ostrich that protected Jal as venerable saints, and so it is not surprising to find the bird Vishkariptan of the Var of Jamshid sometimes regarded as a prophet. Whether it be a bird or a prophet this is the only place in the whole of the Avesta where we encounter the name of this strange creature, and it is surprising that nowhere else should there be any appreciative reference to the eminent services of this animal. It is also surprising that the Fravardin Yesht which is a song glorifying all eminent men of the past should make no mention either of this strange prophet of a bird or of Homa Frashmi.

In the Var the Sun and other stellar bodies rise regularly not in the East but in the South. The Vedas corroborate

The Seventh Wonder. Two Splendid examples of Nature's Beauty.

the Vendidad in this respect, and travellers to the North Pole report to us that when the Sun and other stellar bodies appear on the horizon, they

appear on the south. In the Vendidad the Var of Jamshid is said to extend "Upa Rapithwām," i.e., to the south of Iranvez, and this location is characterised as "Hu paiti dhvanem" i.e., the path of the Sun. We are told in the Vendidad (II, 10), that Jamshid extended his sway in the direction of light i.e., in the direction of the Sun's path towards the south. In the Vedas "Usha" (Gathic "Ushā"), the Goddess of Dawn is also called "Dakshinā," and the Sun is called the Son of Dakshinā, for the Sun can only be born after the welcome appearance of the goddess of dawn on the horizon. All this bears witness to the fact that in the North Pole the dawn that precedes the light of day and all stellar bodies rise towards the south.

In the settlement of the Var the Sun and all other stellar bodies rise in the south, and after a period of six months set in the south.

We who live in the Tropics see the Sun rising in the east and setting in the west. In the Polar regions these stellar bodies rise to an altitude of $23\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ and after the lapse of six months disappear from the horizon in the same direction.

The most striking of the wonders of the Var is that the Sun, the Moon, and other stellar bodies revolve round and round a peak of the chain of Alborz mountains known as Taer (Meher and Rashnu Yeshts). According to Dr. J. J. Modi this chain of mountains must have extended as far as the North pole. The description in the Avesta of the movements of these stellar bodies resembles the description given us by travellers to the North Pole, who tell us that the Sun moves round and round in the south above the head of the spectator like a potter's wheel, and that after the Sun has disappeared the Moon and the Stars revolve similarly round and round after attaining to a certain height in the south presenting an enchanting sight.

Another of the wonders of Var is the long life of Jamshid extending from 900 to 1000 years. Strange and unnatural as this may appear, we find this statement in the Vendidad in the Drvasp and Ashi Yeshts and the Pahlavi commentators corroborate this statement. The Bundahishn reports Jamshid to have lived for 600 years, and according to the Shah-Namah Jamshid's rule extended to 700 years. Moreover this period extending from 600 to 1000 years is the period not of his entire life but of his sovereignty. We are not told at what age he came to the throne. If we take these years into account they would add considerably to his life. According to the Avesta and the Bundahishn Jamshid was killed by his brother Spiture through the intrigues of the tyrant Zohak. Evidently then Jamshid's life would have been still further prolonged if he had not died an unnatural death.

Scholars in the West and in the East alike have endeavoured to throw light on this question. According to some the thousand years of the life of Jamshid include not merely the years of his own life, but also those of the lives of his descendants, weak or powerful, who must have occupied the throne after him, and must have been known under the same name. The thousand years of the rule of Jamshid would thus include the sum total of the period of his own rule as well as that of the rule of his unknown successors. We are reminded by scholars of a similar practice amongst us, when we call by the name of Sir Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy, not only the first and the most famous individual who won the title by his charities, but also all those who have succeeded him in the title. The same explanation is offered by learned critics about the 1,000 years of the rule of Zohak and the 500 years of the rule of Faredun. The Kutar brothers, on the other hand, conjecture that the Avestan "Sat" and the Persian "Sad" which we now take as signifying a hundred, originally indicated the number thirty, and they thus interpret Jamshed's 700 years according to the Shah-Namah to mean only 210 years, and the 900 years according to the Vendidad only to mean 270 years.

According to the Bundahishn a number of generations appear to have intervened between the reigns of Jamshid and Faredun. These are as follows—Faredun, Aspian, Purtorâ, Siâktorâ, Bortorâ, Safidtorâ, Gefratorâ, Ramaktorâ, Vafraveshnitorâ, and Jamshid. Thus Faredun was born in the tenth generation after Jamshid. Can it be that the thousand years occupied by these eight dynasties were ascribed to Jamshid himself? We find similarly 500 years ascribed to Faredun, and according to the Bundahishn nine generations seem to have elapsed between Faredun and Minocheher, *viz* : Minocheher, Manosh, Khoharnâr, Mâm Suzak, Airâk, Thritag, Fragushak, Zushak, Fraguzak, Ganj=(a female), Airach, and Faredun. Here also it is possible that the 500 years covered by these nine generations between Faredun and Minocheher were fathered on Faredun himself.

Such are some of the attempts made by scholars to solve this historical riddle. And yet why should we cast doubt on this Avestan statement about the length of life? All our doubts are suggested by the normal length of human life in our own times. If we remind ourselves of the age and the surroundings, with which these wonders are associated in the Avesta, is it not just possible that nature in its bounty may have endowed men with a long lease of life?

(1) We have to keep in mind the fact that in the Var of Jamshid extreme cold and extreme heat were unknown, that the denizens of the Var knew not the distress of famine nor of scarcity of water, that they were free from all diseases and pestilences, that untimely death arising from feebleness of body, and other causes, was a rare event, that fathers and sons looked like one another in their youthful appearance, that a fifty-year old man looked like a youth of fifteen, that the period of gestation before children were born extended to forty years. With all these facts in view we must have strong reasons on our side to justify doubts about the length of human life in these health-giving surroundings.

(2) The Vendidad tells us that the inhabitants of the Var led a pure life, and that they were free from such vices as pride, vilification, impurity, enmity, deception, destitution, and dishonesty (Vendidad II, 37). With this social heritage of a pure life, and with their freedom from all diseases and vices, there is nothing inherently improbable about the idea that they led a long life extending over centuries.

(3) In the Vendidad and in the Yeshts the inhabitants of the Var are characterised as "amarekhti," that is, as enjoying an indefinitely prolonged bodily and spiritual life. The commentary on the Vendidad states that the Var of Jamshid was a sort of spiritual existence just and righteous (Vendidad II, 20). The Var was a sort of paradise, and the people who lived in it shared in the blessings and

happiness associated with it. We have in all these considerations evidence of the long, happy, and contented life of a hardy people brought up in the traditions of an industrious agricultural life.¹

(4) Fourthly, the lives of Hoshang and Jamshid and their rule are described in the Avesta as "daregemchit api zarvānem," which means "of a long duration" (Jamiad Yesht 26 and 31). Does this expression refer to a number of Hoshangs and Jamshids? We have no substantial evidence in favour of the supposition, and in the passage referred to the expression is used with specific reference to Hoshang and Jamshid. It was evidently intended to draw attention to their remarkably long lives; and as we have said already, there is nothing improbable in this length of life lived amongst such health-giving material and moral surroundings as those alleged to exist in the Var.

1. We have a striking instance of such a hardy life in the Parsi chief Kurush (Khusrai,) who began as the ruler of the small province of Pars, and became famous later on as the founder of the Achaemenian dynasty. This hero had succeeded in overthrowing such great empires as those of Media and Lydia, and yet he chose for his capital a spot amongst the mountains like Pasargard. We are told that on one occasion a Vazir asked the emperor why he, who had laid the foundations of such a powerful empire, should not think of shifting his capital from a mountainous place with its extremes of climatic changes to healthier surroundings. The emperor gave the following reply in the presence of his son: "What is the cause of our victory over such a renowned community like that of the Medians? The Medians were wealthy and prosperous. They became accustomed to the comforts and luxuries which prosperity brought in its train and though they enjoyed the advantages of a peaceful administration, they were gradually emasculated and softened by their surroundings, and lost their former bravery and valour as a nation. We are thankful to Ahura Mazda that he has gifted us with a plain and hardy life, and has led us to victory and renown. We must not therefore do anything which might draw us away from this simple, industrious, and hardy life. Otherwise we shall never retain the proud position which we have gained in the face of the political and military rivalries that confront us." Thus this chief of a small province accustomed to the rough and industrious life of the mountains succeeded in establishing a powerful empire, and these same mountainous surroundings produced a nation of warriors whose achievements have been preserved in history.

We have hitherto considered this question in the light of such evidence as is afforded by religious texts. We may supplement these observations by a reference to other considerations of a corroborative character.

1. In the period following that of Jamshid we have another striking instance of a long life in Zohâk, who, according to our religious texts and historical traditions, is said to have ruled for over 1,000 years in Iran. If such long life is the result, amongst other things, of climatic conditions we can easily understand why Zohâk brought up amongst the same surroundings as Jamshid should have enjoyed the same privilege. Zohâk succeeded Jamshid on the throne, and Faredoon, who was a descendant of Jamshid in the tenth generation is said to have ascended the throne after killing Zohâk. Zohâk therefore must have lived during the entire period covered by the eight generations between Jamshid and Faredun. We have also preserved for us traditions in Persian books of the long lives of Faredun and Afrâsiab, of Kâran, Gudarj, Jal, Rustom, Framroj, all of whom must have owed their long lives to the healthy surroundings in which they lived.

2. Under the climatic conditions in which we are living in this country, we are accustomed to count three generations to every hundred years. We are told that under the healthy conditions of Iranvej a man of fifty-five years looks like a boy of fifteen. In other words the age of fifty-five which represents declining life amongst us was the age of budding youth amongst the residents of the Var. Counting in the same proportion we might therefore suppose that an inhabitant of the Var who was 110 years old, would be a young man of thirty judged by our standards of life. And if amongst us there are people who can live for a hundred years, this would roughly be equivalent to 330 years of life in the Var. There would be nothing surprising therefore if a few of the residents of the Var lived for twice or thrice the period of the average life of the inhabitants of the Var—which average as we have already stated, might have been two to

three hundred years. Where the atmosphere is charged with the imperceptible effects of the lights of the Aurora Borealis, where all the conditions that make for the health and happiness of living creatures are present, and where these conditions of bodily health are strengthened by the influence of purity of mind and integrity of character, the normal length of human life must be inevitably greater than amongst us to-day.

3. The sceptics who throw doubts on this alleged extra-ordinary length of life amongst the inhabitants of the Var urge that a number of rulers of the same name must be understood to have flourished whenever we are told of the long life of a single ruler, and that it is the sum total of the periods of the lives of these different rulers which is ascribed to a ruler with a single name. We do not feel justified in accepting this interpretation, as we have no substantial evidence to indicate the existence of a number of Jalejers, Rustoms, and Framrojes.

4. Even assuming for a moment that we are justified in accepting this interpretation and confining it only to families of rulers, there is a further difficulty that we have to face. The ruler or chief of the province of Rae in Iran was a great personality, the founder of Zoroastrian Religion, who combined in himself secular and spiritual powers, and whose successors were known by the same designation as himself. We refer to Zarathuslitra. Yasna 19 tells us that he was the chief of Rae, and that his successors were known as "Zarathushtremos." If it was a usual practice to associate the sum total of the periods of life of all the descendants of a single family or dynasty with the name of its founder or that of its most prominent representative, we ought to find this practice adopted in the case of Zarathushtra than whom no name could be more familiar. We find, however, that history assigns a life of only 77 years to Zarathushtra. Under these circumstances we might well be justified in refusing to accept this interpretation advanced by some scholars.

5. We find that Pahlavi and Persian writings are not in complete agreement with the Avesta with regard to the length of life ascribed to Jamshid. Our sole authority on this question is the Avesta itself. Whereas in the Avesta the rule of Jamshid is said to have lasted for a thousand years, the Pahlavi and Persian writings speak of six to seven hundred years as the period of his rule. Further the Avesta characterises the rule of Hoshang and of Jamshid alike as "dareghem-chit aipi Zaravānem," that is, "lasting for a long time," whereas in later works the period of Hoshang's rule is limited to three decades only. In view of this discrepancy between the earlier and the later writings we have no a priori reason for attaching more importance to the statements in Pahlavi and Persian books than to those in the Avesta.

6. Nor have we any adequate reason for interpreting the Persian word "Sad," that is, "one hundred," to mean "thirty." Such an interpretation may be applied without any inherent doubt to the period of a thousand years ascribed to Jamshid and Zohāk, but would lead us to an extremely limited period of rule in the case of those rulers who are alleged to have ruled for a century or two. Such a limited period would not have been characterised as remarkably lengthy, and as deserving mention in historical records on that account.

7. The Var was not the only settlement with such remarkable and striking conditions of health and happiness. We have mention in the early literature of other nations of similar lands of the blessed where people lived for a thousand years in health and happiness. The land of the Hyperboreans is familiar to students of classical literature as a paradise far away in the mountains of the North. About this land we are told, as about the Var, that the Sun rose above the horizon only once in a year, that all the year round the sky was bright and clear and cloudless, and life-giving and refreshing breezes added to the amenities of existence. As in the Var the fields

yielded a double crop in the year, and people lived for a period of thousand years. We are also told about the people of this land that when they were satiated with the delights of human life they placed a crown of flowers on their heads and threw themselves into the sea from a rocky eminence, in the belief that they were joining Odin, their chief God in heaven. History also tells us of the delightful climatic conditions of districts like Mazandaran and Kangdez, and we have the renowned country of Kashmir amongst us with all the blessings of a bounteous nature. Thus though a few decades ago the descriptions in the Vendidad of the settlement of the Var were regarded as mythical and as a survival of the poetic fancies embodied in early traditions, the travels and voyages of European travellers in the extreme North in more recent times have turned these descriptions into historical reminiscences of facts and events connected with primitive life.

We have in the Vendidad references to other facts and events connected with the settlement in the Var. These facts and events belonging, as they do, to a dim past have been wiped out from men's minds, but their traces have been preserved in religious books and writings. Many of the wonders that have been associated with the settlement of the Var make greater demands on our credibility than even the thousand years of Jamshid's life. And if some of these wonders find some evidence in their support, with our advancing insight in history and science, we have no justification in rejecting as impossible the comparatively longer lives of Jamshid and his contemporaries. It is quite possible that in the immediate future archeologists and geologists may discover buried under the snow in the far North human skeletons which may throw fresh light on the size the life and the intelligence of the men who lived in those primitive times. Scholars like Westergaard, Haug, and Darmesteter had once rejected as myths and fanciful tradations the descriptions in the Vendidad about the beauties of nature and the marvellous natural phenomenon.

of the age of Jamshid. They even threw doubts on the historic personality of Jamshid and declared him a myth. The light thrown by European travellers on these descriptions has radically altered our attitude towards these descriptions. And if we now look upon them as survivals of historical reminiscences and as possessing historical value we ought not to forget the disinterested services of these Western scientists and savants who have devoted their resources, their energies, and their time to the work of unearthing this precious heritage that hitherto lay buried and unnoticed in our Scriptures.

Amongst the wonderful events and things associated with the new settlement of Jamshid is the bird Vishkariptan, and the comparison of this mysterious bird with another bird Visfranavāz will be useful as throwing light upon this mystery.

Two Mysterious Birds—Vishkariptan and Visfranavāz.

According to the Avān Yesht King Faridoon caused Visfranavāz to fly high into the regions of the sky in the form of a vulture. It lost its way in the sky as it was returning to the earth, and for three days and nights the bird drifted about without finding its way back to its nest on the earth. It thereupon offered its prayers to Avān Arduisur, and entreated the latter to come to its help, and to show to it the way, promising to offer as a thanks-giving to Arduisur a thousand "homa-jivāms" on the river Rangha. The prayer of this bird was thereupon granted, and on the dawn after the third night it found its way returning safe and sound to its abode on the earth.

Scholars are divided in opinion with regard to the real nature of this strange name Visfranavāz, and its flight in the form of a bird. (1) Firstly, the Avesta contains not a single reference to a bird offering prayers to any Yazad, still less offering thanks-offerings in the shape of "homa jivāms". This is essentially a human act, and can be practised only by a human being. (2) Secondly, according to the Yeshts, a careful distinction is to be drawn between

the kind of gifts offered on the one hand by Kings and heroes and their noble followers, and on the other hand by priests. Whereas the former class offer to the Yazads costly offerings in the shape of animals and other objects, the latter class, that is, the class of priests offer gifts of a simpler kind like those of "homa jivâms". It is this simple kind of gifts that is offered to Arduisur by Vifranavâz. May we not therefore suppose that this Vifranavâz was not the name of a bird but that of a human being, one performing the sacred functions of a priest? (3) Thirdly, Vifranavâz is said to have been sent high into the sky by Faridoon. This may be an allegorical description of Vifranavâz ascending some mountainous region like a bird flying into the sky. (4) Fourthly, Vifranavâz thus was evidently a living personality of primitive times who was sent by Faridoon on some mission into mountainous regions. What this mission was, and how it terminated are matters on which the Avesta is silent. All that we know is that he made a vow to Arduisur and his prayer was granted. It also appears from the Avesta that this undertaking was attended with difficulties, that he was risking his life, that in his wanderings he came across the river Arduisur and entreated the river to reveal to him the straight path. We may also conjecture that he must have travelled as far as the top of Mount Alborz, for Arduisur is a raging torrent which issues from a lake five or six thousand feet above the surface of the earth located on Mount Hukara. His abode was in some locality near the River Rangha (Sanskrit "Rasa"), for he desires to dedicate his offerings to Arduisur on this river. All the famous heroes and others who offered their prayers and thanks-offerings to their favourite Yazads in the Yeshts did so on the mountains or lakes in the vicinity of their abodes, and we find similarly Vifranavâz giving his thanks-offerings on the river Rangha.

If Vifranavâz is thus a human being allegorically described as a bird on account of his wanderings in mountainous regions, it is also likely that Vishkariptan, who is

stated to have spread the Mazdyasnian Religion in the Var of Jamshid, is not a bird, but a priest. He might have been living amongst the mountains, and his descent into the plains to reach the Var of Jamshid may have allegorically been described as the flight of a bird. The chain of mountains of which Mount Alborz is one peak was habited by men in primitive times; and Mount Hukarya, which belonged to this chain was famous as the spot where Jamshid offered his prayers. It was from this spot that long before the days of Jamshid the prophet Homa Frashmi had announced the Mazdyasnân Religion, the same religion which later on was proclaimed and spread by Vishkariptan in the Var of Jamshid. The ceremony of Homa (Soma) first announced by this prophet was performed subsequently by Vivangha, the father of Jamshid, and the true Aryans of the days of Jamshid were the followers of the religion announced by Homa.

We might examine this mysterious reference to a strange bird spreading the Mazdyasnian Religion in the light of other considerations. The poetic composers of the Avesta have frequently described the stellar Yazads allegorically. Amongst others Beherâm, Fravashi, and the Khureh of the Kyanians have been described as birds of various kinds. They are stellar bodies, and their movements, appearances, and the blessings they shower on men coming, as they do, from the regions of the sky, lend themselves easily to allegorical descriptions. So also in the Vendidad, a priest who has helped towards the spread of a religion is described as a bird. Religion is a message from the gods of blessings for men. It descends, as it were, from the sky, from the abode of the gods, and as birds, more especially as pigeons, have been known from the earliest times as messengers, a divine message that comes from the heavens is said to be brought by a bird; and Vishkariptan, who spread the Din in the Var of Jamshid, becomes a bird that is instrumental in spreading the religion. The visions of the poet are best conveyed through analogies suggested by the things around us in this world, and a

divine revelation unto men can very well be described as conveyed through a bird, the mediator between the earth and the heavens.

Prophets are rare phenomena in human history, but the Persian and Pahlavi writers repeatedly refer to a succession of three prophets one after another in the remarkably healthy and spiritual atmosphere of the **Nar.**

Three Prophets—Jamshid, Vishkariptan, and Urvatata-Nar. Varejamkard. The Persian writings familiar to us as the Dasâtir and Dabestân call Jamshid a prophet. We cannot however, attach much importance to this view, as in the description of Jamshid's career given to us in the second Fargard of the Vendidad the very first thing that we are told about him is the confession of his inability to undertake the work of a prophet. In Vendidad II, 1-2, Jamshid acknowledges his life-work to be that of the preserver and protector of the Iranian community dwelling in the Var. Thus according to this passage of the Vendidad he never appears in the roll of a prophet, nor does he claim to be one. If Jamshid had been a prophet in his own Var, there was no need of the rise of other prophets after him. And we might also expect his name to be mentioned along with those of the other prophets in the second Fargard.

Some of the translators of the Avesta, like the late Mr. Cowasji Edalji Kanga, call Vishkariptan a prophet of the **Vishkariptan.** Var of Jamshid, and the Pahlavi commentators of the Vendidad have also looked upon Vishkariptan as a prophet in the form of a bird. We have already pointed out the nature of the allegory involved in the reference to a bird, but the Pahlavi commentators tell us further that Vishkariptan after having spread the Din in the Var suddenly disappeared into the invisible world of spirits (Ahu minoyân rakhâr vazarunta). No importance can be attached to this statement also. Vishkariptan was evidently a priest who had spread the Din of the prophet Homa in the Var of Jamshid. If

according to Vendidad II, 42, Vishkariptan was a prophet there was no need to raise a question, as is actually done in II, 43, as to who is to be "ahu" and "ratu", *i.e.*, spiritual and temporal chief. Vendidad II, 43, moreover, mentions in connection with the subject of prophets the single name of Zarathushtra. Here Zarathushtra asks Ahura Mazda, "who is the Ahu and Ratu of the Var of Jamshid?" and Ahura Mazda replies "O, Zarathushtra, it is Urvatata-Nar, and thou thyself, O, Zarathushtra". But then who is this Urvatata-Nar? Our modern Parsi translators of the Vendidad and of the Pahlavi commentary have taken him to be a son of Zarathushtra, thus making of him a third prophet. Evidently there is here a misreading and misinterpretation from early times of this passage of the Vendidad.

The Pahlavi commentators call Urvatata-Nar a "Dastobar", *i.e.*, a Dastur, and Bundahishn XXXII, 4, describes Urvatata-Nar. him as a temporal "rad" (chief) of the "Vâstryosh", or the agricultural classes. The Bundahishn does not describe him as a "rad" of the Din.

Let us in the next place examine in detail the original Avestan passage in question: "Ko aeshâm asti anghushcha ratushcha. Urvatata-Naro Zarathushtra tumchayo Zarathushtro," "who is the temporal and spiritual chief of this people? O Zarathushtra, it is thou thyself, the famous one." This translation of the passage which is our own may be justified in the light of the following considerations. (1) We know as a matter of fact that history does not know any prophet by the name of Urvatata-Nar. History knows no other prophet except Zarathushtra. If we accept the interpretation that Urvatata-Nar is the name of a prophet we are obliged to cast doubts on the knowledge and insight of Ahura Mazda himself. (2) Secondly, Urvatata-Nar in the passage is not a proper name, but an adjective applied to Zarathushtra meaning "valiant or famous." It is true according to the Fravardin Yesht that there

were two historic personages known by the name of Urvatata-Nar, one of whom was a descendant of Zarathushtra, and another born after his death (Farvadin Yesht 98, 127). But in Vendidad II, 43, there is evidently no reference to either of these two personages.

(3) Thirdly, according to philological rules both in Avesta and Sanskrit the interrogative pronoun "Ko" and the verb "aspi" are both used in the singular. If there was a reference to two individuals in this passage, then according to invariable grammatical practice the pronoun and the verb would have been in the plural. Thus this passage evidently refers to a single individual, and that is Zarathushtra. (4) Fourthly, the Pahlavi commentary translates this passage literally, taking the pronoun "mun" and the verb "aita" in the singular, though for some reason or another the original meaning seems to have been lost in the translation. (5) Fifthly like "Urvatata-Nar" we have another word "Aurvataspa" employed in a double sense both as an adjective and as a proper name, meaning "one with renowned or splendid horses." "Aurvataspa" is found applied as an adjective to King Lohārsp and to the Yazads Khurshed and Apām-Napāt. Moreover, Urvatata-Nar is derived from Urvata-Nar and both Urvat and Aurvat are two forms of one and the same word. In the Beherām Yesht we find "Urvat" applied as an adjective to a camel in the sense of "a famous camel" and in another passage in the same Yesht it is applied to a bird meaning "a powerful bird." (Beherām Yesht 11 and 19). (6) Sixthly, If anyone is entitled to the first rank amongst the followers of Zarathushtra it is not Urvatata-Nar, but the more famous son or descendant of Zarathushtra, Istavāstra, for he has been often praised in the Avesta as a renowned individual along with Gayomard, Zarathushtra, and Gushtasp, and in the Pahlavi writings he has been called the "rad" or the chief of the Athornans. (7) Seventhly, it must be remembered that in the Pahlavi writings Urvatata-Nar is only known as a chief of the agricultural classes,

and as for the Avesta, it knows no one except Zarathushtra entitled to the eminent position of Ahu and Ratu.

Though the blessed and happy conditions of life which once prevailed in the home of our ancestors have disappeared, and their vestiges buried under the earth, their memory has been preserved in tradition and constitutes a link with the past. According to the Vendidad

**Two mortal foes-
Winter and the
tyrannical Zohak.**

two enemies attacked Iranvej. These were "Azicha im raeidhi tem" and "Ziamcha daevo dâtem," one a serpent, and the other snow (Vendidad I, 3.) This serpent "Azi" was the tyrannical Zohâk poisonous like a serpent, and the other "Zim" was winter, harsh and harmful like a Dev. Both these evils overtook the country with fatal consequences. Though the Vedas and other Hindu Shashtras are silent as to the circumstances under which the primitive Aryans were compelled to leave behind them their early happy home, we find some references on this subject in the Vendidad, and these references are borne out by recent advances in geography and geology. According to the Vendidad the land of bliss in which all living creatures, including animals, led a long and happy life, was in the course of time subjected to terrible calamities in the shape of frost and snow, making life difficult for man and beast.

Vendidad II, tells us how Ahura Mazda calls together an assembly of spiritual Yazads in the heavens, and how Jamshid accompanied by a number of holy men goes forth to meet this assembly. Jamshid tells Ahura Mazda about the coming calamity on the Iranian community in the shape of snow, characterises this coming winter as exceedingly harsh and fatal, and entreats him to come to the help of the living world and save it from this calamity (II, 21-38). This allegorical description makes us suppose that Jamshid and other scholars and seers had closely studied astronomical phenomena and conditions, and anticipated some strange and unaccountable changes in

the succession of the climates. They might have observed enormous accumulations of snow and ice on the mountains round about and might have foreseen the disastrous consequences of the melting of the snow with the advent of warmer days. They built barriers for protection against these calamities in appropriate places and began to move forward towards the South founding new settlements on the way. According to Vendidad I, 4, the climatic conditions of Iranvej were subsequently radically altered so that winter prevailed for ten months in the year and summer for two. Travellers of our times have told us that in the countries about the North Pole there is a similar succession of winter and summer, a fact which makes us locate Iranvej in the extreme North. We are further told in the Vendidad that this ten months' winter was so severe, that it proved fatal for the waters, for the earth, and for all vegetation, and that it brought with it many other evils. The Aryan people were thus compelled to move in a southerly direction. Thus the first Fargard of the Vendidad is full of historical and geographical reminiscenses of earlier days.

THE TYRANT ZOHAK AND HOAMA.

Just a few observations on the career of this tyrant who brought ruin and destruction on Iran. In the traditions about Jamshid, preserved in the Avesta and the Shah-Nameh, we are told of the tyrant Zohâk, the non-Iranian ruler of Babylon, who invaded Iran, put an end to the rule of Jamshid, and became the ruler of the country. His rule was fatal to the prosperity of the people, who looked on terror-struck at the misdeeds of this harsh and cruel ruler. He wallowed in blood, took away by force such fair and renowned maidens as Shehernaz and Arnavâz, till at last exasperated by the prolonged oppression of a thousand years, the Iranians revolted against his rule, and the valiant and patriotic Kâveânhangar took advantage of this revolt. The brave Faridoon, a descendant of the early Aryan monarchs, who had hitherto been lying concealed in the mountains, came forward to lead the Iranians, to free his country from the oppression of Zohâk and to ascend the throne. Thus the accursed despot who had aimed at bringing about the destruction of Iran was subjugated at last.

A question may well be raised at this stage as to why in the beautiful descriptions that we have already had of **Heaven and Hell**, the new settlement, this settlement, associated with the happiness of Paradise, is said to have been situated in the North, the direction, which is frequently cursed in the Avestan writings and in which, according to the Avesta, is located the residence of the Devs and Drujas. The solution of this question is not very difficult. As we have already stated on an earlier occasion, six to eight thousand years ago, our ancestors in the far North lived under climatic conditions favourable to a long and happy life, and the North was then rightly regarded as a sort of Paradise. Climatic

changes subsequently intervened, a severe winter made life exceedingly unpleasant, if not impossible, and those who had lived happy lives in the North were obliged to abandon their homes. Thus the North ceased to claim the attachment and reverence which it had once commanded, and the aversion to the North manifested so clearly in the Avestan writings is a reflection and a survival of the feelings entertained by the people, and transmitted from generation to generation in the form of tradition. Our Aryan ancestors gradually descended towards the South, and for a long time, in the course of their migrations in a southerly direction they must have continued to suffer from the cold northerly winds, and the memory of these sufferings might have been still fresh at the time when the Avestan writings were composed. Another reason for this traditional aversion to the North may be found in the fact that the wild and fanatical Tartars and Touranis, the Hanus and the Dānus who raided their territories and destroyed their property and lives, all came from the North. The South was from very early times a lucky direction for the Aryans of Iran. Even when they lived in the far North, they could behold and admire the movements of heavenly bodies in the direction of the South and when they were overtaken by natural calamities, it was the South which offered them a shelter. This is why from early times down to our own we have loved and entertained reverence for the South, and turned to the South when we offered prayers asking for the gifts and bounties of God.

We have already seen that the blessings and happiness associated with the age of Jamshid were due to the climatic and atmospheric conditions of the North. But these were not the only sources of happiness in those early days. We find in the Avesta references to the immortalising drink of the Homa (Soma) plant, which secured a long and happy life. According to the Avesta long before the days of Jamshid there had lived a holy person by the name of Hom Frashmi, whose

Alburz and the
Homa Plant.

special residence was on Mount Alburz. He is described as "Spanangha vaidyāpaiti," that is, as a wise and learned scholar, as "Danghu paiti," that is as a chief or ruler, and as "Frādat-gaetha," that is, as one who promoted happiness and prosperity amongst the Iranians. He is said to have discovered and preached a religion suited to those primitive times, to have founded the Mazdyasni Religion, to have composed a number of the Gathic slokas, a number of Māntrhas, and Nāsks, and to have founded and established ceremonies associated with the Homa plant, the Barsam, the Zaothrā, and the Aivyāonghana, (Yasna 9 and 10, and Meher Yest 88). According to these references Hom Frāshmi was the first to discover the Homa plant, and the plant got its name of "Haoma Jāiri" from the name of its discoverer. According to the Avesta this discovery was made by Hom Frāshmi in the very tract in which he had spent his life.

Yasna 9, 10, and 11, which give us descriptions of "Haoma Jāiri" (the fresh plant,) "Haoma Frāshmi" (the

The Nature of the plant. discoverer of the plant,) and "Haoma Duraosha" (the immortalising drink), tell us that the Homa

plant was to be found growing on Mount Alburz, and this plant is described as "Hukeharpa" (beautiful in appearance), "gaoma" (full of juice or milk,) "Zairigaona" (that is, yellow or golden colour,) "nāmyānsush" (a tender and bending plant), "hubaoidhi" (fragrant or sweet smelling), "uzadāt" (fermenting,) and fruitful. Birds have been described as spreading the growth of the plant in all directions from Mount Alburz, evidently taking its seeds or fruit to distant places, scattering them on hills and rocks, and in fields and valleys. We are also told that the plant grew "Paouru-saredha" (in a variety of species and in abundant quantity.)

According to the Avesta, almost all the Saoshyants (benefactors, seers) had tasted the juice of this life-giving plant,

Its Virtues. and had derived from it their energy and their powers of insight. Vivanghāna, Athavyāna, Asrat, and Paourushaspa,

had all tasted this drink and had given birth to men like Jamshid, Faridoon, Urvâkhsha, Keresâspa, and Zarathushtra, men who in their times rendered unparalleled services (Yasna 9, 1-15.) Following this we have a description, in elaborate terms of the great virtues of this plant. In our religious writings it is characterised as "Nemohnomai," and homage is rendered unto it under this name. Its health-giving powers are described in Yasna, 10, 6, where we are told that the ceremony of straining the juice of Haoma and the act of drinking it, even in small quantities, are equivalent to the destruction of a thousand Daevas (diseases). Yasna 10, 8, tells us that wherever Haoma is treated with reverence it brings with it all the blessings of bodily and spiritual welfare. We are told that whereas all other drinks are intoxicating and foster evil passions, "Haomahe Madha" (the drink of Haoma) fosters purity of mind and body, and stimulates healthy activities. Haoma dwells in the bodies of those who treat it with affection as their own offspring (Yasna 10, 9). "Do Thou not be short-lived like the rapidly flowing sacrificial miik, do Thou dwell in our bodies for safety" (Yasna 10, 14). The pious Zoroastrian exclaims "Oh, Haoma, all the blessings of health arise from thee through Vohu Mano (the good effects of mind)," (Yasna 10, 12); Haoma endows men with a long and healthy life (Yasna 9, 19), and with regard to the bodily and spiritual gifts conferred by Haoma, Yasna 9, 16 speaks of Haoma as vitalising to the drinker and as the leader that indicates the righteous path to the soul. Still more eloquent are the words in Yasna 10, 14, "haithimcha ashahe khao ahi," that is, "Oh, Haoma, Thou art indeed a living well of righteousness." When we keep in mind these virtues of the Haoma plant, its potentialities for promoting bodily health, for ensuring length of life and for fostering all things that secure the well-being of the soul, we feel we have no reason to look with doubtful eyes at the descriptions in the Avesta about the extraordinarily long and healthy life of people living in primitive times.

According to tradition "Noshdāru" was a kind of drink which secured to the drinker a long and happy life. This **Noshdaru.**

precious drink was prized as an invaluable possession and preserved as such amongst other rarities in the royal treasury. The early Iranians used it at times for eradicating their diseases, and in the days of the Kyanian Monarch Kaekāus we have some evidence of it preserved in tradition. We are told by Firdosee, that when the valiant Sohrab was approaching his end through the fatal wound inflicted by his father Rustom's dagger, Rustom longed to obtain this "Noshdāru" from the royal treasury of Kaekāus in order that his son's life might be saved. We have no desire to call unto question the existence of such a drink. But we cannot refrain from asking why are Scriptures should contain no reference to this drink if it possessed such precious virtues or powers of conferring the blessings of a long and healthy life? Whilst we have in the Avesta reference to a drink of this kind there is no specific mention of the virtues of "Noshdāru." The drink referred to in the Avestan writings is "Haomahe Madha," that is, "the drink of Haoma." The virtues of "Noshdāru" are not different from the virtues of this drink, and a comparison of the two names, confirms the hypothesis that the two drinks were identical.

The adjective "duraosh" which we find applied to the "Hoama" drink in the Avesta, has close affinities in original **A Comparison.** and meaning with the term "Noshnāru." "Duraosha" is a compound of the Avestan "dura" (= "remote"; of: Sanskrit "Dura" = "to create difficulties,") and "aoshangha" (= "death,") and the word thus means "what removes death from us," and has thus come to mean "whatever prolongs life or confirms immortality". When we turn to the word "Noshdāru" we find it similarly composed of two Persian words "anosh" and "Dāru." The first of these is a short form of the Avestan "aoshangha" (it is derived from the Avestan "an" = "without or except," and "aoshangha" = "death,")

and it means in reference to our bodily life "without untimely death".^t "Anaoshangba" becomes abbreviated into "anosh" in Persian, the initial "a" was dropped with the lapse of time, and the remaining "nosh" had added to it "Dâru." Thus we find that "duraoshangha" and "anaoshangha" are two Avestan forms of a similar meaning. As "Haomahe madha duraosha" means "the Haoma drink which causes death to retreat," so "Noshdâru" means "a drink free from untimely death." Both these expressions are names belonging to the same language and founded in the same group of facts. They are two different forms of words having the same meaning. Thus "Noshdâru" is not different from the Haoma drink referred to in the Avesta. The identity would have been more evident if instead of "Noshdâru" people had called it in Persian "duroshdâru".

The question may here be raised whether the immortality

What is Immortality? bestowed by the drink of Haoma is only a prolongation of the present bodily life. The descriptions in

the Avesta bearing on immortality imply a reference not only to the prolongation of the present bodily life, but also to a prolonged future life of the spirit. In the Avesta, the gift of a healthy life conferred by the drink of Haoma is associated with the blessing of immortal happiness in heaven. The immortality thus conferred refers both to the present and future life. This double reference can be traced in later Pazend literature where the soul is described as "ravân ne anusheh" (Avestan "anaoshangha"), that is, "immortal," and in the ritual connected with the dead the deceased is remembered by the expression "anushehe ravân." The same words appear amongst living persons, in a short form in the name of the famous King Noshervân (Anusheha ravân). We also find in Pazend writing "Anoshdâru" referred to, as the spiritual food given to the soul of a

^t. The body is destructible and in the Avesta it is characterised as "aoshanguhaiti tanu" that is, "body liable to death". It is only the soul that is "anaoshangha". This word when used in connection with the bodily life implies a relatively long life.

dead man on the morning of the fourth day, and in the Hādokht Nusk it is called "Zaramya raoghna". This expression implies a comparison between the sights which face the soul of a deceased man on the morning of the fourth day in its journey towards the spiritual world, and the sights which nature reveals in spring-time with blossoming flowers and fruits. The author of the Hādokht Nusk mistook the expression "Zaramya raoghna" to be a kind of oil to be found in spring-time, and therefore declared that it was an act of piety to sacrifice innocent animals on the morning of the fourth day, and to dedicate the fat of the animal as offering to Atesh-Beherāms in order to ensure salvation to the dead. Noshdāru and Zaramya Raoghna are only symbolic representations of the ideas of the everlasting and blissful condition of the soul, which can desire no material food after death.

Yasna 55, 1-2, tell us with regard to the true needs of the soul "Yāo no henti gāthāo harethra-vaitishcha pāthra-vaitishcha maiyēush Kharethāosya," i. e., "the verses of the Gathas are like protecting angels to us, and are like a kind of spiritual food to us," and again we are told "Yāo no henti urune vaem kharethamcha vastremcha," i. e., "the Gathas are like food and covering to our souls." These passages impress upon us the truth, that the soul is a spiritual entity, and that from the morning of the fourth day it needs no material food or clothing, and that all that it needs are the sacred words of the Gathas, which satisfy its hunger and thirst and nourish and protect it. In the light of this teaching are we not justified in regarding as useless and opposed to the spirit of Zoroastrianism, many of those expensive rites and ceremonials which are prevalent amongst orthodox Parsis, and which are practised in the name of Religion? Similarly, the custom which prevailed amongst us of offering to a dying man in his last moments the drink of Parāhaoma was symbolic of the soul's immortality. And yet this practice gave rise to the entirely wrong belief that drinking the water of Parāhaoma (Avestan Parahaoma =

"the Haoma water prepared with the proper ceremonials") would secure salvation for every dying man, whether he were good and righteous in his life, or evil-minded and unrighteous. It would thus appear that "Homa Dâru" or "Nosh Dâru" did not merely imply "a long life on earth," but also conveyed the idea of "a full and blessed life, linking past, present and future in an eternal whole." This was the immortal drink of the ancient Iranians and the honour of having discovered it belongs not to Thrita but according to Avesta to Hom Frâshmi.

Persian history is familiar with another drink under the name of **Shâhdâru** of which we are given descriptions and

whose origin is traced to a strange combination of circumstances in the days of Jamshid. It is said to be obtained from the fermentation of the juice of over-ripe grapes. Though we have descriptions of the health-giving properties of this drink, we have no reference to the idea of its conferring immortality. Shâhdâru and Noshdâru are evidently two different types of drink with different virtues and qualities. We are told of the presence of iron in Noshdâru which made it useful as a health-giving drink. We are familiar with the importance of iron as a curative of diseases and as a restorative of health. These virtues of Noshdâru were subsequently ascribed to the wine Shâhdâru in later times. As the known properties of the wine resembled the properties of the Noshdâru of earlier days, it was identified with it.

This precious drink was prepared, by throwing into a mortar

The preparation of Haoma. "Haoma Jâiri" (the fresh Haoma plant), "Jivâm" (milk), and "hadhânaepata" (roots of the

pomegranate tree, or juice of the pomegranate fruit). All these were mixed, pounded, and strained, accompanied with ceremonials, and a fermented drink was thus obtained which was used as a sacred object. According to the Avesta, there were a number of varieties of the Haoma plant found growing on mountain

peaks, in valleys, and in the fields. But the most precious of these plants was that which was to be found on Mount Alborj. We are told that the wise Lord had blessed the Haoma plant on Mount Alborj with great virtues (conferring wisdom and energy). ("Aurvantem thwâdâmi dâtem bagho nidathat havâpâo haraithyo paiti barezayâo"). This mountain and the adjoining range had iron in the composition of its rocks, which may have affected the character of the plant itself, thus giving to it its peculiar virtues. When later on Mount Alborj was covered with a permanent layer of snow, this precious plant must have been destroyed, but the description of this plant, and its association with Mount Alborj remind us of the wonders of that early age.

In one place we find a description of Meher Yazad on Mount Alborj, performing the ceremony of straining the juice of Haoma plant, obtained from this very mountain, and using an iron mortar and pestle.

Meher Yazad performs the ceremony of straining Haoma.

Ahura Mazda also appoints him as a joti singing the hymns of praise whose music is described as reaching to the sky and spreading over the entire earth. In this passage the pious reciter makes a remarkable request to Meher. He appeals to Meher to protect him against anger and other vices, and also to give him health both in the present and the future as well as the bodily and spiritual life (Meher Yesht 89-92.) Are we to accept this description as true? Far from it. This is only an allegory—a symbolic description of the movements of Meher Yazad, pictured as a process of straining the Haoma juice. The abode of Meher is said to be in that place in the heavens, which overlooks Mount Alborj on the North, and its regular movements are described in the form of an allegory. This description also incidentally throws light upon the importance attached to the Haoma plant in the early days. The poets of the Avestan age frequently symbolize the movements of heavenly bodies, with the help of the familiar material objects of

daily life. When therefore they had to describe the movements of Meher Yazad they resorted to the symbolism of straining the Haoma juice as a suggestive and appropriate illustration. The ceremonial act of straining the juice is the very foundation of the Yasna and other ceremonials. Now Meher Yazad is described as appearing in the sky mounting above Mount Alborj a little before sunset, and as spreading its light over the earth. The movements of heavenly bodies in the sky are, as it were, stellar ceremonials, and that is why the two instruments of religious ceremonial, *viz.*, the Hâvan (Mortar and pestle) and Aivyâonghana (the seat and the link) are called Stehar-Paesangha and Mainyu-Tâshta, that is, of the shape of stars and constituted of spirits, and the sky itself is characterized by the same two adjectives.

Thus the Haoma plant, its origins on Mount Alborj, and the descriptions of the stellar ceremonials connected with Meher Yazad, all point to one conclusion. We have already noticed in another place that the description of the appearance of Aurora Borealis in the North Pole, with its subtle influences, was taken to be one phase of the light of Meher Yazad, and as this stellar light was instrumental in promoting health and happiness throughout the whole of creation, so also the Haoma plant contributed towards the promotion of a long and happy life amongst men. The Haoma plant has its own place in the age of Jamshid, as one of the gifts of Nature for the realisation of happiness in the created world.



CEREMONIALS CONNECTED WITH THE DEAD.

In the tenth Fargard of the Vendidad we find the following

The first three days following the death of a man and the vendidad. sentence "ime vacha framrava yoi henti gâthâhava bishamrut thrishamrut chathrushamrut", that is, "Do Thou recite these stanzas from the Gathas

which are recited twice, thrice, four times," (Vendidad X, 2). In the second Fargard, the question is first raised, as to what should be done to repel the attack of and to destroy the Druje-nasush (the microbes) which arising from the dead affect the living. The answer to this question is given in Vendidad X, 2 *viz.*, that certain passages in the Gathas have to be recited. The process of decomposition, which starts in a dead body always involves dangers for the living, and the Vendidad describes the recital of Gathic passages as an effective protective measure against this danger. These short passages constitute, as it were, the Gaha-Sarna of the early Avestan times. It was subsequently elaborated into the seventh Hâ of the Ahunavâd Gâthâ and the spirit of the earlier shorter recital was lost. The passage of the Vendidad in question bears on the ceremonies to be performed on the occasion of death, and the Gathic stanzas are described as powerful mantras, and yet in the Pahlavi commentary of the Vendidad written in later times the Gathic stanzas are described as an act of reciting the Vendidad itself. This is the origin of the later practice of getting the Vendidad recited on the death of a man. The Pahlavi commentary tells us "Javit divdât yajabahunet" that is; "the Vendidad should be recited."

The reference to the Vendidad here is exceedingly inappropriate :

- (1) There is a world of difference between the language of the Gathas and the Vendidad. There is a considerable interval of time between the age of the Gathas and that of the Vendidad. (2) The Gathic passages which constitute the Gaha-Sârñâ are to be recited in the presence of the dead body immediately after death, whereas the Vendidad may

be recited after the body is disposed of in its final resting-place. (3) Whereas we are told that the Gathic stanzas if recited counteract the evil influence of Druje-Nasush, there is no such reference in the Avesta with regard to the effects of reciting the Vendidad. (4) What is more, in Vendidad X, 3, we are asked "which are the Gathic stanzas recited twice, etc.?" and in the answer to this question there is no reference to the Vendidad Nusk. On the other hand there is a specific reference to the twice recited passages "ahyā yāsā, ushtā ahmāi, Spentā mainyu, etc." (5) Though the Pahlavi commentator has given a correct translation of the thrice and four times recited passages of the Haptan Haiti, it is surprising that he should without assigning any reason speak in the commentary about reciting the Vendidad.

We are able thus to trace the origin of the practice of reciting the Vendidad three times on the first three days after the death of a man. This mistake is perpetuated in the later Pahlavi writings and the Persian Rivāyats, thus giving rise to an exceedingly expensive ceremonial custom, and this is not the only instance in which the mistakes made by the Pahlavi commentator have led to the introduction of expensive customs and ceremonials. It is necessary for us to lay stress on this particular instance of the Pahlavi commentator's mistake, in view of the undesirable elaboration of ceremonials connected with the dead which are customary amongst Parsis to-day. We have seen how the Pahlavi translator of the Vendidad speaks, in the commentary, of the Vendidad, where he should have spoken of the Gathic passages recited twice. What is more regrettable, however, is that in the later Pahlavi writings and in the Persian Rivāyats the simple commentary is regarded as a part of the original text. Thus a wrong comment is with the lapse of time transformed into an injunction prescribed by the sacred scriptures, and an expensive custom is sought to be supported by the authority of the Scriptures. We have a number of similar practices connected with the ceremonials of the dead, which can be similarly shown to owe their origin to

errors in translation and interpretation of the Pahlavi writers. Thus, for example, the Vendidad Sadeh (with its 22 Fargards) is not a composition bearing on the sacrifices to be offered to Ahura Mazda or to any Yazad or Amshaspand. It is a code of laws of the early Iranians, and we find descriptions in the work of various rules and regulations designed to secure the health and physical welfare of the people. In later times it has been given a ceremonial significance; various passages from the Yasna and the Vispered have been interpolated, and it has been included amongst the ceremonial writings.

In the Hâdokht Nusk we find the following passage : “ **kā aevō Ashem and Patet.** ashostuitish, yā vispem imat karshavere yat khanirtham.

“ Yām bā nā usteme urvaese gaye he ashem staoti..... Arejaiti frastavano humatacha hukhtacha hvarshtacha rījabaremno dushmat-acha dujukhtacha dujacharvarshtacha.”

Question.—“ Which is the Ashem Vohu, whose **value** is equivalent to all the mineral resources of this universe ?”

Answer “ That Ashem Vohu which a man recites in the last moment of his life praising good thoughts, words, and deeds, and casting away from him all evil thoughts, words, and deeds, is equivalent in value to a whole prosperous country.” (8-9).

In this passage we have an injunction on every Zoroastrian to recite the Ashem Vohu in the last moments before his death, and the **value** of such an Ashem Vohu is declared to be beyond measure, as equivalent to the value of a prosperous country. The last moments of a man’s life constitute a most solemn occasion, and our religion requires every Zoroastrian to recite a passage from the Gathas as he gives up his life.

The Ashem Vohu thus recited in the last moments of an individual's life accompanied by repentance for the wrongs unconsciously done in life is a brief and solemn prayer. Our religion enjoins on each one of us in the last moments of his life to dedicate his soul to his creator, Ahura Mazda, with the thoughts of noble deeds done in life and noble words spoken, and in this short prayer we have an attempt to keep the soul absorbed in high ideals in the critical moments immediately preceding death, and thus to give it peace and freedom from the worries of life. The words that should accompany the feelings of repentance in the last moments of life must necessarily be few and suggestive. In these moments the soul is reminded of the approaching prospect of freedom from the sorrows and disappointments of earthly life by the recital of the sacred promises of the Gathic hymns, and is asked to look forward to the immortal blessings of the life that faces it after death.

"Ushtā ahmāi yahmāi ushtā kahmāi chit vase Khshyāns Mazdāo dāyāt Ahuro", that is, "may he be blessed whom Ahura Mazda blesses with his gifts!" But the soul of the unrighteous man is described as crying aloud in despair and disappointment on account of his evil deeds in this earthly life, "Kāma neme jām Ahura Mazda futhraneme ayeni," that is, "to which side shall I turn, O Ahura Mazda, in what direction shall I go?"

It is interesting to notice some of the natural and also some of the unnatural changes which have occurred in relation to this injunction for the recital of a few Gathic phrases on the approach of death.

As we have already stated in the Hadokht Nusk we have an **A Charge from the Dead.** injunction for the dying man to repent for whatever wrong he has done, and to recite the words of the Ashem formulae which are associated with ideals of Righteousness. This injunction is subjected to a radical transformation in the Pazend

prayers known as the **Patete Pashemāni**, where a charge is laid on the descendants of the deceased conveyed in the following words :

"**Hame** farmāyan Ashein Vohu begudirashni. Pateti pish **az** bevādīshni pas vadardēhman. Man jādehrā **az** gunāh pa patet bahod farmudār khāheshni hamdāstān hom," = "I enjoin the recital of Ashein Vohu at the time of death, and the recital of the Patet before death. After my death I am the person who enjoin, desire and associate myself with my children who will recite the Patet for my wrong deeds".

According to the spirit of the Avesta every man in his dying moments is asked to offer repentance and to recite the words of the Ashein, and considerable importance is attached to this recital. Death, however, is one of those occasions of grief when the dying man may very often be unable to retain his self-possession and preserve the peace of mind contemplated by our sacred writings. In a few cases where men die at a mature age such self-possession and peace of mind may be possible. But these are difficult to secure where men are cut off in the prime of youth. Under these circumstances the Pazend writings give permission to a dying man who is unable to recite the sacred words himself to have those words recited to him by others. But this has nothing to do with the foolish idea of a dying man's wrongs being atoned for by the recital of the Patet by another, however closely related to him. Such an idea is not only foolish but opposed to the spirit of Zoroastrianism.

The permission that is thus given in the Pazend writings draws our attention to the charge imposed by a dying man on his survivors. This charge consists in the recital of short prayers conveying a message of love and loyalty, and is imposed not indifferently on any stranger but on a man's nearest and dearest relations. They must be "man jādeh," that is, the blood relations of the deceased. The dying man longs for the love and solace of these near and dear ones. He

can evidently derive no satisfaction from the solace of a stranger. This is evident from the fact that in the passage the dying man is called the "farmudār," that is "enjoiner of such devoted affection," "Khāheshti", that is, "one who longs for such affection", and "hamdāstāni", that is, "as one who acknowledges himself to be at one with those who love him". If these words of prayer and affection are recited by a stranger they cannot appeal to the dying man, never draw out his affection, never give him that peace of mind which he is seeking. This simple but solemn charge which is thus imposed by the religion on the near relations of the dead has never been properly understood; very often this charge is transferred to a priest, who can only be a stranger. Instead of being cherished as a legacy involving responsibilities of a sacred character, this charge is treated as a commodity which is transferred to priests, who are paid for carrying it out.

It is instructive to summarise briefly the changes which with the

**T. e Extravagance
of change in
religion institutions** lapse of time occurred in connection with this original injunction of the Avesta for the recital of prayers in a man's dying moments. In the Avestan writings the duty is laid on a dying man to recite the words of the Ashem. In the Pazend writings this duty is transferred from the dying man to his children. This was the first change that occurred in this connection. In the second place the few words that constituted the Ashem formula to be recited by the dying man became in later times elaborated into a long prayer known as a Patet Pashemāni. Thirdly, the duty which was originally laid on the children of the dying man was later on transferred to the priests. A fourth change may also be noticed, and it is this—that the prayer known as the Patet which was intended to be recited only for the first three days after the death of a man in Pazend writings came to be recited for years after his death. In the fifth place there occurred a change still more undesirable. According

to the Avesta in the Pazend writings the recital of the Ashem or at the most the Patet, was to be undertaken by the dead man's children or descendants so long as the corpse remained in the house. This original institution was replaced in later times by the wrong and expensive custom of purchasing the services of hired Mobeds for the recital of prayers for days together on the spot where the corpse was laid. The changes that we have thus noticed are typical of many more extraordinary transformations of our early religious ideas and institutions which have been disastrous in their economic consequences for the middle and poorer classes of our community, and which have alienated us from the religious ideals of our forefathers.

Yasna 43, 5, has the following lines :—“ Hyat dāo shyaothnā mi-
zdvān yāchā ukhdhā akēm akāi Vanghuim ashim
The Patete Vanghave thwā hunarā dāmoish urvaese apeme ” =
Pashemani.

“ O Ahura ! to the very end of creation Thou wilt by Thy just dispensation give Thy blessings to the righteous, and dispense the evil consequences of their deeds to the unrighteous, to each one according to his thoughts and deeds. These famous words of the prophet thus convey unto posterity the great lesson, that each of us prepares a heaven or a hell for himself by his own thoughts and deeds, that we reap what we have sown.

If from this we turn to the Patete Pashemāni the internal evidences of this collection of prayers point out that the men who composed or brought these prayers together, *viz.*, Dastur Adarbad Marespand, evidently intended the Patet as a symbol of repentance by a living man for his own wrongs. If repentance is thus to be offered for sins, it can only be offered by the man who has committed them. Sin is a spiritual disease, and the man who suffers from it has himself to adopt the proper remedies. In the case of diseases of the body no man thinks of curing a disease by asking another man to drink the prescribed medicines, and no man can get rid of it by subjecting another man's body to a radical operation. So it is also with regard to spiri-

tual diseases. Your sin cannot be atoned for by another man's offering for you. And so also with the laws of the land. The social wrong inflicted by a murderer is not forgiven by society if another man pleads guilty, or offers to pay a fine. It is only atoned for by the infliction of punishment on the criminal himself.

The duty of offering repentance for wrongs done was imposed not only on men but on women as well, and we accordingly find in the Patet a list of sins liable to be committed by both the sexes. When reciting the Patet therefore each of the sexes should only enumerate the sins to which his or her own sex is liable, and omit the recital of the sins belonging to the other sex, and this must have been the intention of the famous Dastur who composed this collection of prayers. It is desirable in this connection that in the printed texts of the Patet the sins peculiar to each sex ought to be marked off by the use of asterisks or other printed signs.

This is not, however, the only abuse to which the Patet is liable.

The abuse of the Patet. The original idea of a living man's repentance for his past deeds symbolised by his recital of the Patet,

has been replaced in later times by the foolish and un Zoroastrian idea that a dead man's sins could be atoned for by the recital of the Patet and by other prayers by strangers. We find repeated references in the Vendidad to the injunctions to offer repentance for one's sins by means of the Patet. Wherever there is a reference to repentance for sins, either deliberately committed, or committed in ignorance of consequences, this reference is to living men offering such repentance for themselves. There is no reference anywhere in the Vendidad to the Patete Ravān to be recited for the purpose of saving the soul of a dead man, and enabling him to escape the consequences of his sin. Zoroastrianism always preaches the personal responsibility of each individual for his own deeds, and there can be nothing so opposed to

the spirit of the Religion as the later idea of one man's sins being atoned for by the repentance of another.

The Patet referred to in the Vendidad must not be confounded with the Patete Pashemāni composed by Dastur Adarbad. There is a world of difference in the language of the two writings ; and centuries separate one from the other. The Patet referred to in the Vendidad is short, summarises the main teachings of Zoroastrianism, emphasises the need of a life of high ideals and righteousness. This short prayer gave place in later times to the tediously long Patete Pashemni, and this is not the only instance of the substitution of long prayers for short ones. In the Sassanian times there arose many innovations in the shape of elaborate drayers and ceremonials which with the lapse of time were transformed into sanctified customs. It was also in the Sassanian times that Pahlavi and Pazend prayers found a place side by side with the original Avestan prayers. But the change extended further. The Avestan Prayers had added on to them at the beginning and at the end Pazend passages and prayers. And still later, a large number of ceremonials and prayers of a meaningless and expensive character were associated with the ceremonials of the dead, like the Patet, Getikharid, Hamā Yasht, Gahambar, Rapithwan, Zandeh ravan, etc., All those in our community who maintain that these accretions in the shape of prayers and ceremonials introduced at a later time are a heritage from the days of the prophet himself, either deliberately conceal the truth in their own interest, or manifest a ghastly ignorance.

Vendidad XIV gives us eighteen stanzas bearing on the question of the salvation of an individual's soul, and approximately thirty-one different devices are described by means of which a man can atone for his sins. Not one of these devices or injunctions for salvation convey a suggestion about atonement after the death of a man. Vendidad XIV begins with the question—" O Lord, where are col-

lected the gifts which a righteous man is able to obtain from Thee in this earthly existence for the salvation of his soul? Where are these gifts enjoyed? Where is the final reward to be earned?" The answer to these questions is given in the following stanzas, viz., that on the morning of the fourth day after the death of a man his soul reaps these rewards near the foot of the throne of Ahura Mazda and the Amesha Spands, and that in the enjoyment of these rewards the most powerful instruments are a man's own good deed done during his life-time. Zoroastrianism thus preaches belief in two existences,—the earthly and the spiritual,—and points out two alternatives for each individual, the good reward that follows on a righteous life (Heaven), and the evil consequences of an unrighteous existence (Hell). No entreaties or repentance offered by a stranger, no prayers or ceremonialis performed after a man's death can ever alter or modify this inexorable law of Righteousness. Very often in Pahlavi, Pazend, and Persian writings do we come across passages which involve a forgetfulness and even a reversal of the idealism of the Gathas and the Avestan writings. It is therefore pleasing to note the views of a learned Dastur like Dastur Mânushcheher in the Dâdastâne Dîni, which remind us of this early idealism. "All Periodakeshis are agreed on this that no one who recites the Patet like a true Behedin can ever go to hell." This is true, but only if the Patet is recited by a man during his own life-time. We are told in our Scriptures that a man who does not repent for his sins in his life-time can never hope for the blessings of heaven after his death. It is still better to refrain from committing wrong than to commit it and repent for it.

We shall quote here two illustrations from the Patet Pashemani, which reveal what strange absurdities have arisen
 Anomalies in the Patet. by interpolating in wrong places a reference to a dead man:—

"Agar mânđeh bahod ku gunâhe (behedin.....) tokhita ne bahod padfarâhe se shabânihâ padash khursand hamdâstân hom",

that is, the man who recites the prayers says " If the sin of Behedin... has not been atoned for, and if he is not freed from the consequences of sin, I am willing and I consent to undergo the necessary punishment for it for three nights." (§12). What horrid ignorance does this reveal on the part of my co-religionists who recite these prayers like parrots ! Do they realise the grave character of the responsibilities that they undertake in these prayers ? The Mobed expresses his willingness as a punishment for the sin of the dead man for whom he recites the Patet to undergo all the hardships of the first three nights, each of which is equivalent to a period of fifty-seven years. It is as good as if the Mobed had expressed his willingness to undergo the death-sentence for another man who had committed a murder.

To take another illustration: " Az marg āvārie āstāne ke (Behedin.....) az ahriman darvand va divān avar rasid khursand bed ". In this passage the Mobed who recites the prayer for the dead man rejoices at the sufferings and hardships that are inflicted upon the soul of the dead man, whether that man has committed wrongs or has not. In other words, in the midst of the sorrow and grief that follow upon the death of a man the priest offers rejoicings for the hardships that his soul may undergo (Patet Irani).

Ordinarily it is possible to find the source of later ceremonials and prayers in the Pahlavi writings; but in the case **The Source of these Anomalies.** of the Patet Ravāni with one solitary exception, this is not possible, for the simple reason that references to the dead are interpolated in a very light-hearted manner, into earlier writings. Such interpolations can only have been made in comparatively recent times by irresponsible priests and writers. These interpolations have been evidently made by interested parties, and tend to throw into the shade the idealistic teaching of the prophet and his followers. It is the duty of all Zoroastrians who have feelings of respect and affection for their dead to be rid of these absurdities,

and it is equally the duty of the spiritual fraternity to which I belong to open the eyes of our ignorant co-religionists and to save them from the huge economic burden, which these customs and ceremonials involve.

We find an answer in two places to the question—"When the When to recite the Patet is to be recited?"—in the Patet Pashemāni Patet? and in the Patet Khud. In the first of these writings we have the following:

"Hame farmāyam.....pateti pish az bevadirashni. Pas vadardeh man man jādehrā az gunāh pa patet bahod" = "I enjoin the recital of the Patet before my death. And I also enjoin that my children should recite the Patet after my death for the wrongs". In this passage (§12) a Zoroastrian points out two occasions for the recitation of the Patet—one before his death, and the other after his death. In the Avesta we have an injunction in the Hādokht Nask for the recitation of the Patet by a man himself in a spirit of repentance before his death. And yet we have noticed in later times changes in the Patet itself and in the occasions on which it is to be recited. If we now raise the question whether this recital is limited to any period of time after a man's death, the answer may be found indirectly in the mention of other prayers and ceremonials which are associated with the recitation of the Patet. These other prayers are Ashem Vohu, Sedosh, and Getosarid (?), and as these prayers are to be recited only during the first three days after a man's death, it is evident that the recital of the Patet must be confined to the same period.

The other evidence which points to the same conclusion is to be found in the Patet Khud. We have here the following passage:— "Andar se shab pa vajārdane āne sud hamdastān hom. Agar avam kāri chun ān bed ku avi patetish az geti baravam agar az khishān najdikān kase hamrāh pātētish kūnad hamdastān hom"—that is, "I

acknowledge with readiness the advantages to be obtained in the first three nights after death. If in my life I have committed a wrong, and I have not atoned for it by the recitation of a Patet in my life time, I can derive advantage from the recitation of the Patet by a near and dear one who loved me while I was alive". It is evident from this passage that the Patet prayer is intended to be recited only within the first three days after death—(Seshab)—and not intended to be recited indefinitely. And yet we find that under the name of the Patete Ravāni, and for the salvation of the dead man's soul, this prayer is being recited for years together through the hired services of one who is a stranger to the dead man. Such a practice is not only expensive but opposed to the very spirit of the Religion.

We have already seen that the Patet recited before the death of

Who is to recite
the Patet?

a man is a kind of confession of sins which every Zoroastrian is asked to make on the approach of death for wrongs done consciously or unconsciously

during his life-time; and in case the dying man himself finds it impossible to carry out this injunction, the recital may be made on his behalf by a priest who is his spiritual guide and friend. With regard to the Patet to be recited after a man's death, we find that the recital is to be undertaken by his children or descendants as an act of repentance for any wrong or misconduct done by them towards the dead man. This is apparent from the fact that in the fourth section of the Patet there is a reference to repentance for wrongs done towards one's parents or children and relatives. In the same Patet there is also a reference in another passage (section 11) to the grief and sorrow caused to the soul of a dead man by breaking a promise to recite the Patet. In the Patets we find in brief the last will and testament of a Zoroastrian which he completes and seals, as it were, with the words that he is an enjoiner (farmudār), an aspirant (khāheshni) and an associate (hamdastān).

I cannot help referring once again in this connection to a question that was raised some time ago when plague was raging in the community as to who should undertake the recital of prayers before a dead man's body ! Whether in case the services of a Mobed are not available there would be any objection to the prayers being recited by a Behdin before the body ! The answer to this question is to be found in the Pazend writings to which we have already referred. We find in these writings a reference not to strangers but to Khishān Nejdikān. We have here a clear indication that it is the duty of the near relatives of a dead man to secure rest for his soul by the recital of prayers and the performance of proper ceremonials. The duty or manifestation of loyalty to a dead relative is forgotten, if not shirked, when the work of performing these ceremonials or reciting of prayers is entrusted to hired agencies.

2

In the Pazend writing known as the Patete Pashemani (§ 12) we have the following words—*pas gudardeh man man Sedosh. jâdehrâ.....sedosh.....farmâyad*, that is “ let my children after my death carry out or enjoin Sedosh.” In this prayer a Zoroastrian leaves behind him an injunction to his children to get the prayer known as *sedosh* recited after his death ‡ The prayer that can most appropriately be recited thrice after the death of a man is evidently a prayer dedicated to the

‡ This Pazand word *sedosh* is derived from Pahlavi *setosh* and it corresponds to the Avestan *stuitish*, praise or adoration). In the Pahlavi commentaries, this Pazend word is understood to mean “ three Sarosh”, and this meaning has been followed by all later translators. But this is not its original meaning, nor it is a compound of two words. It is only an abbreviated form of “ Setâyasna”. *tars satudan* is another appellation to be found in later writings. It is marked by the specific addition of the adjective “ three”, and it means “ three adorations or sacrifices”.

praise of Sarosh and this prayer is referred to in all Pahlavi, Pa-zend, and Persian writings as Sedosh.

Amongst the ceremonials connected with the dead, this prayer of Sedosh is considered next in importance to the Gah-Sarnâ, and though we do not find any specific reference to it in the Vendidad, its appropriateness can be easily realised when we remember that it is one of the functions of the Yazad Sarosh to watch and look after the soul of a dead man. Very often during his own life-time a Zoroastrian in his prayers happens to pray "O Sarosh ! do Thou become my spiritual guide and protector in this life as well as in the life to come". (Ys. 57.25). We can well understand why after the death of a man during the first three days it should have become customary to recite the Yasna connected with Sarosh, the Sarosh Bâj, and the Karda of Sarosh.

Amongst the ceremonials included in Sedosh may be mentioned as equally important the four "Bâj" performed on the morning of the fourth day, the *Nirange boe dâdan* (the "Uthamna") ceremonies and the *Afringâne Dahmân*. According to the Zoroastrian Religion the fourth day is the critical moment when a man's actions done during his life-time would be judged. And in these ceremonials and prayers which we have mentioned there are symbolic references to the soul's experiences after it has left the body.

In the ninth Fargard of the Vendidad (Vd. 9.51-57) we have a description of the methods to be adopted to get rid of the impurities arising from contact with a dead body. We are told that there is considerable danger to the safety of the living if the priest entrusted with the task of purifying is himself ignorant and illiterate. Two remedies are suggested for getting rid of this danger. One of them is to put to death the illiterate priest. The other is to offer dedicated

**The Origins of
Sedosh.**

prayers to Sarosh for three days and nights before the fire accompanied by the Barsam and the Haoma ceremonials. Either of these expedients will be enough to guarantee the people against danger. There is undoubtedly no direct reference in the Avestan literature to the prayers dedicated to Sarosh to be recited in the first three days after a man's death. But in the Vendidad passage which we have cited we have the origins of the later practice of Sedosh. In this connection we may also draw attention to the Pahlavi commentary on Vendidad XIII. In the Vendidad a marine animal called "Sag e Abi" is spoken of as exceedingly useful, nay sacred, and the man who kills this animal has either himself to be put to death, or to offer dedicatory prayers to the innocent soul of the "Sag e Abi" for three days and nights before the fire accompanied with Barsom and Haoma ceremonials. In the Vendidad passage itself: viz., XIII; 55, in the prayers to be recited for three days and nights there is no specific mention of any Yazad. The Pahlavi commentator, however, speaks of these prayers as associated with Sarosh, and even goes further suggesting that prayers to Sarosh should be offered for the soul of the man himself who is put to death. We are thus in a position to trace the origin of the later custom connected with the prayers to Sarosh to the later Pahlavi commentaries.

9

We have in the Patete Pashemāni the following words—" *pas vadardeh man.....getofarid farmāyad,*"
Geti Kharid. that is " let the getofarid (geti kharid) be enjoined after my death". Here a dying Zoroastrian imposes on his children and descendants the duty of performing the

Getofarid after his death. Though this word *getofarid* is understood by later translators to mean the *geti kharid* ceremonial we shall see further on that this is not its true meaning. The two expressions are different both in their origin and in their meaning. The first may be traced to a wrong Pahlavi reading of an Avestan word, and it signifies a gift or an offering. The second is the name of a ceremonial foreign to the Avesta itself, and it means "to earn or purchase merit on his earth". A confusion has arisen by mixing up the two words *getofarid* and *geti kharid*, and we owe this confusion to the Pahlavi writings.

In the Avestan times various brief prayers were composed by different individuals dedicated to different Yazads.

The Avestan Literature. Many of these short prayers and writings were destroyed or lost in later times. Attempts must have been made to bring together these sacred writings and prayers, and the Yasna that we have got today is evidently a collection of scattered writings.

When the prayers separately dedicated to different Yazads were collected together the whole collection consisting of seventy-two Hās of the Yasna was regarded as one prayer, and a few words of praise (*Khshnuman*) were interpolated for Ahura Mazda and all the other Yazads and Amesha Spands.

Though the Yasna in its present form can be traced back to relatively early times, it is not to be wondered at that

The Pahlavi Literature. this collection of writings, being the only one dedicated to the praise of Yazads, came to be known in later Pahlavi ages under different names like *Getikhārid*, *Nāvar*, *Nirāngedin*, *Hamā Yesht*, *Zindehravān*, etc., and that additions were frequently made to the original collection. In the main the changes that were thus made in the original writings centre round the repetition

several times of the seventy-two chapters of the Yasna, and in the introduction in some places of passages from the Vispered, in other places of passages from the Vendidad. Thus we find that amongst the ceremonial prayers known as *Pâv Mehel* we have only repetitions of the seventy-two chapters of the Yasna, of the twenty-three chapters of the Vispered and of the twenty-two chapters of the Vendidad, with the addition of a few words of *khshnuman*. The only specific ceremonial writing in this collection was the Vispered intended to be recited on the occasion of the *Gâhânbârs*. This ceremonial composition was confused and mixed up in later ages with ceremonies like the *Getikharid*, *Nâvar*, etc.

Thus we find that in the primitive Avestan period poets and sages had written short descriptive hymns and compositions in praise of different Yazads, and that it was usual in those days to dedicate different kinds of offerings to those Yazads as a mark of reverence. The short hymns were used in association with these dedicatory offerings. We have in our present Yashts a survival of those earlier poetic descriptions of the powers of the Yazads and in some of them we find remarkably striking descriptions of some of the memorable events of early history.

The ceremonial known as the *Getikharid* is not to be found in the Avestan age. We come across the name for the first time in Pahlavi writings. It is described as one amongst the many religious duties which a Zoroastrian has to perform during his life-time. In later writings extraordinary importance is attached to this ceremonial. We are told that it is the duty of every Zoroastrian to get the ceremonies of a *Nâvar* performed—at any rate it is indispensable that he should perform the ceremony of *Getikharid*. A good Zoroastrian may have done many acts of merit in his lifetime, but if

he has not performed this ceremony his soul after his death cannot cross the bridge and has no prospects of reaching heaven. Even if a Zoroastrian has in his life-time committed sins, the performance on his part of Getikharid when alive will on his death raise a wall of protection between his soul and hell, and will save him from hell, and lead him towards heaven (Riv. D H. p. 86). Teachings like these are opposed to the spirit of Zoroastrianism. They afford one more illustration of the exaggerated importance attached to ceremonies in later writing.

Transformation of the ceremony in later times. It is worth briefly indicating the origin and later developments of Getikharid. A ceremony the performance of which was originally imposed as an injunction on the living was like other ceremonies subsequently transformed into a ceremony enjoined for the welfare of a man's soul after his death. We have already seen that the Pazend word *Getofarid* is neither another name of the ceremony known in Pahlavi as *Getikharid*, nor does it express its proper meaning. *Getikharid* means "to obtain merit in this world". But in spite of this clear meaning a false reading of the word in Pahlavi led to its being interpreted as a ceremony to be performed for the dead. In the sentence that we have quoted from the *Patet* we find that there is a reference to four prayers or ceremonies to be performed viz., *Ashem Vohu*, *Patet*, *Sedosh*, and *Getofarid*, and we have strong reasons to believe that all these were to be recited only for the first three days after death. As a matter of fact we find that *Getikharid* is not included amongst the ceremonies of the first three days and is usually performed after these days. Thus the first mistake that is committed is to identify *Getofarid* with *Getikharid*. A second mistake arises when it is understood to be a ceremony to be performed

after the death of a man, and this in turn has given rise to other mis-understandings.

We find moreover that the *Bareshnu* has been associated with that of the *Getikharid*. The *Bareshnu* is a ceremony only prescribed in the *Vendidad* (*Fargarads VIII and IX*) for purifying a Zoroastrian who has come into direct contact with a corpse. This ceremony is performed for the welfare of the living. And when the name of the deceased occurs with the expression "may the body of the deceased be made pure" we have a violation of the spirit of the Religion and a patent absurdity. There is nothing so undesirable and unmeaning as the interpolation in the ceremonials of a later age of these two practices, viz., the ceremony of the *Bareshnu* and the recital of the *Patet* for the welfare of the dead.

We have already noted the confusion of *Getosarid* with *Getikharid* due to the different readings of *Pahlavi* letters. The Source of the misunderstanding. In *Vendidad Fargarad XVIII* we have a sentence, (§ 12) which has been translated into Pazend as below in the *Patet Pshemani* (§ 9):

Avesta—Haomahe hutake dathaiti usefritindm vā myazdandām.

Pazend—Hom darun hoshfarid myazdān nehādeh.

The word *usefriti* which appears in the sentence above from the *Vendidad* corresponds to the Pazend *hoshfarid* and it means "consecrated". The "consecrated gift" (*hoshfarid myazd*) is that which is offered on the dawn of the fourth day, and in the *Vendidad* we are asked to exclude a sinful man from partaking of this gift. Ervad Sheiarji Bharucha suggests that this gift refers to the sacrifice of an animal on the dawn of the fourth day.† Now the Avestan *usefriti* appears in *Pahlavi* as *ostofarid* and the word is to be found in this form in

the *Patet e Irane* and other writings. The initial *o* gets dropped with time and the word appears in the form *satofarid*. * The first letter *s* (સ) of this word owing to the different readings of one and the same Pahlavi letter was read wrongly as *ge*, and thus the word *Satofarid* which originally meant "an object of pious offering" was read as *Getofarid*, and, owing to similarity of name with *Getikharid*, was identified with this latter as a ceremony to be performed after the death of a man. An offering to be dedicated to the Yazads after the death of a man on the morning of the fourth day is transformed into a ceremony for the welfare of the dead.

In the *Getikharid*, if we except the *Vispered*, we have only a collection of the seventy-two *Hâs* of the *Yasna* to be repeated eight times on each occasion and for eight days successively, with the addition of a few words of the *Khshnuman*.† Though the *Getikharid* and *Nâvar* ceremonies are regarded as different from one another and intended for different objects the ceremonies do not differ in their nature except in a few minor points. In fact it may be suggested that one of them

†. See his *Rististan*, p. 48-50.

‡. Thus Pahlavi *ospuri* becomes *sapuri* (complete). Pahlavi *oshastr* becomes Pazend *sastar* (oppressive). Pahlavi *oshtar* is transformed into Persian *shator* (a camel).

¶. ANALYSIS OF THE GETIKHARID CEREMONY.

Time.	<i>Khshnuman of Yazads.</i>	<i>Nature of the prayer.</i>
For the first six days.	The angel <i>Nâvar</i> .	Six <i>Yasna</i> and <i>Bâj</i> .
Seventh day.	<i>Sarosh Yazad.</i>	One <i>Yasna</i> and <i>Bâj</i> .
Eighth day.	<i>Sirojâ</i>	One <i>Yasna</i> and <i>Bâj</i> .
Ninth day.	<i>Dâdâr Ohrmazd.</i>	<i>Vispered</i> , <i>Vendidâd</i> , and <i>Bâj</i> .

One difference which marks off the *Getikharid* from the *Nâvar* ceremony is that of giving the *Bareshnu* to the person intended to be *Nâvar*. A ceremony which in the *Vendidad* is prescribed for an impure Zoroastrian who is regarded as *Riman*, that is, as a means of spreading diseases, is later on used as a ceremony for preparing a man for priestly functions.

has been derived from the other. Thus we can understand why in

the *Dādāstāne Dīni* and later on in the *Rivāyats* we find it laid down that every living Zoroastrian should get the *Naavar* ceremony performed, and failing that the *Getikharid* as the last resource.

4

In the Pahlavi commentary of the fourteenth Fargarad of the Vendidad (§ 2) we have the following passage:—

Hama Yasht. *amat hamāk yazishna kunad shdyed; amat davāzdeh homāst, bard vādūnd aich shdyad*, that is, "(as penitence for a sin), *hamāk yazishna* (complete dedicatory offerings) might serve the purpose; even *davāzdeh homāst* (offerings to twelve yazads) will do."

In the Fargarad of the Vendidad referred to, and as stated previously, a marine animal called *Sag e ābi* is regarded to be equally useful with man, nay, even as holy. Anyone who kills this animal is asked to perform a number of things as penitence for this deed, and for the salvation of his soul, e. g., to do social service, to offer in charity, and to perform other useful and pious actions. One of the prescriptions laid down in the Fargarad as an act of penitence is that the man should be flogged with a whip. The Pahlavi commentator of this passage goes on to suggest that in case the sinful individual is unable to undergo the sufferings of being flogged he should perform the ceremony known as *Hamāk Yazishna*, or failing that the *Davāzdeh Homāst*.

The Hama Yasht as a ceremonial is a stranger to the Avesta. The

The growth of a ceremonial from the injunction to perform charitable deeds. Avesta knows nothing about it. This and other ceremonials owe their origin to the commentary on the Vendidad and other Pahlavi writings. The *Hama Yasht* can be similarly traced to the Pahlavi commentary. In the Pahlavi writings we often come across the name *Hamāk Yazishna*, which means "complete dedication." It became transformed later on from a com-

mon noun into the proper name of a ceremonial called *Hamā Yasht* and the reason is not difficult to understand, for in the passage in question following this common noun we have the name of the well-known ceremonial *Davāzdeh Homāst* and one of these two is known as "greater *Hamā Yasht*," The *Hamāk Yazishna* is regarded as the "smaller *Hamā Yasht*." In Pahlavi writings we find four divisions of the ceremony called by different names, to each of which are assigned a smaller or larger number of prayers. These four sub-divisions are *Homāst*, *Hādokht Homāst*, *Dahā (do) Homāst* and *Davāzdeh Homāst*. At present amongst us only two of these four are used for ceremonial purposes, the first and the last, the two others are unfamiliar to our ceremonial priests.

In the Vendidad wherever we have references to acts of penitence for sins we have usually specific injunctions for the performance of acts of charity and social services, acts of a practical and useful character. These wise prescriptions of the Vendidad are replaced in Pahlavi writings, in many places by injunctions of the performance of ceremonies. And this is not the only change that we notice in the Pahlavi writings. In the later Pahlavi works as well as in the Persian *Rivāyat*s we find other serious misunderstandings. Even the ceremonies like *Getikharid*, *Hamā Yasht* etc. which in the earlier Pahlavi writings were intended to be ceremonies performed during a man's lifetime for the welfare of his soul have been transformed with the lapse of time into ceremonies to be performed after a man's death thus giving rise to the ceremonialism which marks our present communal life.

It has been suggested that the reason why we cannot find in the extant Avesta any writings connected with these ceremonials is that we have lost the original twenty-one *Nasks*. This is an exceedingly misleading suggestion. The present customary ceremonials have no place, and ought to have no place in the Avesta. We have repeatedly offered instances in which we have successfully traced the origins of

this customary rituals in the Pahlavi commentary of the Vendidad, and this is just the field for further investigation when tracing the origins of our present day ceremonies. Along with this our investigations must take into account the changes which were brought about from time to time in the political and social life of our predecessors in Persia, the decline and fall of the Sassanian Empire, the loss of power and prosperity for the priestly classes, and the need and temptation for creating new sources of income to which the sacerdotal caste was subjected.

The ceremony of the *Hamd Yash* has been associated in later times with Zoroastrian women in their menses, and on

Misapplication of Ceremonials. any woman who in this period does not live absti-

mously is placed the duty of getting the *Davāzdeh Hamā Yasht* performed as an act of penitence for her sin (Riv. DH. p. 410.) The association of this ceremony with a woman in this condition is opposed both to the spirit of the Vendidad and that of the Pahlavi commentary. In the sixteenth Fargard of the Vendidad we have the injunction that a woman should live in a strictly abstimious manner during her menses. And we have no reference in this passage of the Vendidad or in its Pahlavi commentary to the performance of a ceremony of this kind. The first occasion on which we see an injunction of this kind laid down is in the Pahlavi *Dādastāne Dini*, where the ceremony of *Hamd Din* (the smaller *Hamā Yasht*) and the *Davāzdeh Homāst* (bigger *Hamā Yasht*) is enjoined as an act of penitence in case a woman has had intercourse during her menses (Dd. 77). But even here it is not the woman but the guilty man who is held responsible for the misdeed, and is asked to get the ceremony performed. We can trace this injunction of the *Dādastāne Dini* to the eighteenth Fargard of the Vendidad, because here also we have a reference to a man who has had intercourse with a woman in menses, and such an individual is asked to offer among other

things, as a sign of penitence, dedicatory prayers to fire and to water with the ceremonial offerings of Barsam, Hom, Jivām, Hadhānaepat, and dried and fragrant fuel (§ 67-76). It is this injunction to offer such gifts which has been transformed into the ceremonial of the Hamā Yasht in the Pahlavi writings. But it must be noted that the injunction in the Vendidad is laid not on a woman but on the vicious man, who is guilty of this deed.

We have so far indicated with the help of evidence from the Avesta and the Pahlavi writings that the ceremonials associated with *Hamā Yasht* were intended to be an expiation for a grave sin, and that the obligation to perform the ceremonials is a personal obligation. In later times misunderstandings arose with the result that we find in the Rivāyats an injunction to have a number of Vendidāds recited after the death of a woman who during her lifetime has failed to observe the necessary abstemiousness in her monthly periods (Riv. DH. p. 412). In still later times there arise the *Hamā Yasht* ceremonials. We have already indicated that when in the period of the Pahlavi writings a number of different ceremonials arose through odd combinations of passages culled from the *Yasna* there was associated with these ceremonials the idea that they were intended for the promotion of the welfare of the "living soul" (Dd. chap. 80).* This

* The whole of this chapter of the Dēdastāne Dini is based on the idea that the ceremonials are intended for the welfare of the living, and that they have nothing to do with the ceremonials associated with the dead. But the structure of sections 25 and 29 of this chapter is confusing and misleading, and naturally gave rise to misunderstandings. In these sections there is an injunction for the performance of the *Visparad* of *Arda Farvash* on the fourth day, and after the fourth day for the performance of *Dvāzdeh Homāst*. The language of this sections leads the lay-reader to think of the ceremony of the *Hamā Yasht*, which is performed on the fourth day after the death of a person, and thus to confuse the ceremonials for the living with the ceremonials for the dead. Nevertheless we find in these passages that the learned Dastur has used the names of the ceremonials as common nouns and not as proper names. The meaning of the *Visparad* of *Arda Farvash* is "offering sacrifice unto all the chiefs of the Farohars" and that of the *Arda Farvash* of *Dvāzdeh Homāst* is "sacrifices unto the Farohars of the twelve months." The performance of the *Hamā Yasht* on the fourth day after the death of a man is as incongruous as the performance of the *Visparad* on the fourth day.

idea that underlies the writings of the learned Dasturs of those days was forgotten in later times; the prayers and ceremonials which were once enjoined on the living are subsequently converted into expensive ceremonials for the dead; and this without the slightest foundation either in the scriptures or in the traditional writings. The ceremony of the *Hama Yasht* is one amongst these unnecessary and costly ceremonies.

It may also be observed that in the commentary on Fargarad XIV (§. 2) of the Vendidad it is enjoined on a Zoroastrian who happens to have killed the animal *Sag e Abi* to perform the *Hama Yasht* as a token of repentance. The ceremony is intended to be an atonement for a wrong. In later times, however, the original object of the ceremonial is lost sight of, and a ritual which was originally intended for the welfare of the living is thus converted into a ritual for the welfare of the dead. The *Hama Yasht* becomes an additional, unnecessary, unfounded ceremonial for the dead. Perhaps one reason for this anomaly may be the word "*ham&ak*" which means "entire" or "complete" and the ceremonial is supposed to be entire or complete by the inclusion in it of several hundred *Yasnas* and *Vendidads*. In the small *Hama Yasht* there are included 144 *Yasnas* and 12 *Vendidads*, and in the larger *Hama Yasht* are included 144 *Yasnas* and 144 *Vendidads* †

ANALYSIS OF THE DVAZDEH HAMA YASHT CEREMONY:

Names of the <i>Yazads</i> .	No. of <i>Yasnas</i> .	No. of <i>Vendidads</i> .
Hormazd	12	12
Tir	"	"
Khorshed	"	"
Mohor	"	"
Adar	"	"
Avan	"	"
Spandar	"	"
Govad	"	"
Khordad	"	"
Amerdad	"	"
Sarosh	"	"
Ardâ Farvash	"	"

We have a striking illustration of the absurdities in connection with the elaboration of ceremonials in the Pahlavi commentaries. To the twelve *Yazads* named above are added ten more, and the number of *Yasnas* and *Vendidads* is increased by 120 respectively. Such absurdities are naturally self-destructive, and we find they have disappeared in time.

ANCIENT CEREMONIES : ADDITIONS AND IMPROVEMENTS MADE IN THEM.

On a close scrutiny of the implements used by Parsi priests in the performance of ceremonies, we find that they are not at all very ancient, but that in course of time various changes and variations have been made in their use.

At present we have been taught one use of these implements by Oriental and Occidental scholars. But this our knowledge is incomplete, for we find from the internal evidence of Avestan writings that these implements were formerly put to a twofold use. I have here tried to give the correct translations of the texts to show this double use; and in some cases I have tried to prove the correctness of my translations by giving illustrations from actual ceremonies as they are performed.

I have also tried to show how the original purity of ancient ceremonies has been revived by changes and improvements which had to be made on account of an undesirable mixture which, in course of time, was engrafted on innocent ceremonials. This desirable improvement is due principally to the Parsi Sāsānian rule. The learned men of those later days seem to have exercised great discretion in the changes they introduced, for whilst they have made changes in the ceremonial implements and in the ceremonies themselves, they have not trifled with the language. I crave the attention of readers to several instances of this fact, which will be found interspersed in various parts of this essay.

What specially attracts our attention here is the striking parallel between the religious ceremonies performed by Parsi Mobeds and Hindu Brahmins. This proves the early origin of these ceremonies. Some ceremonies originated when the Parsis and

the Hindu Aryans lived as one nation in Central Asia. Afterwards, although the Aryan races separated, and divided themselves into two branches, *viz.*, the Parsis and the Hindus, and were known as two different nationalities, yet some ancient ceremonies have still been preserved in common by both these races, with slight modifications. For instance, the ceremony of the *Haoma* or *Saoma* existed amongst the Aryans before the time of Zarathushtra— a fact clearly proved by various references in the Rig-Veda and the Avesta. The *Haoma* plant is as old as the time of its discoverer, *Haomā Frāshmi*, who first utilised it by pounding it in a mortar (*hārana*) and drinking its juice. Similarly other ceremonial implements also appear to be very old. The use of the branches of certain trees, and of a mat made out of some kind of grass, the stone or iron mortar, the sieve made of the hair of some animal, and the like, of which we find mention made in connection with ceremonies, impress us with the simplicity of remote generations. The implements date as far back as the times when minerals were not discovered in sufficient quantities. In later generations, after the discovery of minerals, an improvement was made on the old implements in this respect that the implements were prepared out of metal instead of other ruder materials. For the branches of trees, we find the *barsam* made of brass or silver; for the mat of grass we find the *dlātgāh* or *zōt-gāh* of stone; for the stone or iron mortar we find the *havana* of copper or some other mixed metal; for the sieve of hair, we find substituted the *tashia* with bores made of some metal; and various other metal substitutes are to be seen in the modern ceremonial implements. Those changes will be described in greater detail, later on.

A list of ceremonial implements is given in various passages of the Vendidad, the Visperad and the Yasna. Some of these have gone out of use, and other new ones have been added to the original list. I shall deal here only with those that offer remarkable

suggestions. Amongst these, the names of the most important implements used in extant ceremonies, are the *Haoma-Zāri*, the *Varesa*, the *Baresma*, the *Aividonghan*, the *Hadhānaepata*, the *Darun*, and the *Gaoshudo*. The charge made by some people that these are all inventions of modern Dasturs and Mcbeds is untenable, for their use dates from the times of our remote ancestors. It is true that they have not been preserved in their original shape; for they have assumed another aspect with the change of time, place and circumstances.

With the march of times, changes are made not only in the ceremonial implements, but various modifications and additions in the position and status of the priests also become noticeable. I have briefly touched on them here.

HOMA-ZAIRI—THE GREEN HAOMA PLANT.

Haoma-Zāri means the green haoma. It is a plant or shrub. Different epithets are applied to it in the Avesta; e. g., *Zāri*, i. e., green; *Zāri-gaona*, i. e., of a yellow colour; *Nānyādsu*, i. e., with bending branches; *Hubaoidhi*, i. e., well-scented; *Huiti*, i. e., juicy. From this it follows that the dry Haoma twig which is now in vogue, could not have been used originally, but that it is a mere imitation. Originally, the green plant was itself used, but as the plant does not grow in India, the dry Haoma twig, called *Hōm-sali*, is substituted for it. This dry twig does not possess the properties of the green plant. The *Hōm-sali* now used has taken the place of the original *Haoma-Zāri*.

ANOTHER USE OF THE HAOMA: HOUSEHOLD MEDICINE.

According the Avesta, this plant possesses some effective properties. Therefore, it was used also for the purposes of household medicine, in addition to its use in ceremonies. We are told of

Iranian ladies deriving benefits from its use, just as the officiating priests did.¹ We also find the expression of a wish that the mortar for pounding the plant may be used widely in houses and streets, cities and countries.² From this it appears that the haoma plant was used as a medicinal shrub. The people of Afghanistan and Baluchistan even now use a shrub which they call *Hām*, for medicinal purposes.

The Haoma shrub grows abundantly on the mountain ranges and valleys of the Albûrz. Its noble properties became manifest for the first time to *Haoma Frâshni* and hence its name, *Haoma Zâtri*, from its discoverer, Haoma. The first to use it and to promulgate its use was this same celebrity.³

THE AVESTIC HAOMA AND THE VEDIC SAOMA.

The parallel between these two was first pointed out by European scholars. In both religions the name is used in the double significance of a material noun and of a *Yazad* or *Devitâ* presiding over the material substance. Just as the health-giving juice of the Haoma was, and is, utilized by Zoroastrian priests as a sacrificial drink, so was the drink of the Saoma common amongst the ancient Brahmins. Modern Brahmins call it *Saoma-valli*, though they do not use it in drink. According to the Hindu *Shâstras*, the other meanings of Saoma are the Saoma-juice, liquor and the moon. Many points of similarity are, as in the present instance, to be seen in the ancient ceremonies of the Brahmins and the Mobads.

HAVANA: THE MORTAR FOR POUNDING THE HAOMA.

There were, at first, two kinds of the *Hâvana* which is the second ceremonial implement. One was the *Asmana-Hâvana*, i. e., the two stone mortars, and the other the *Ayanghahena-hâvana*, i. e., the two iron mortars. The dual was used to express the mortar

¹ *Yasna* I, 15.

² *Visperad* XII, 5.

³ *Mihir Yt.*, 90.

with its pestle. The mortar described in the Avesta was distinct from the *hāvana* now in use. In the present *hāvana*, copper or some other mixed metal is used, and that is made specially to give out a ringing sound. The modern *hāvana* is utilised for the double purpose of producing a ringing sound and of pounding the haoma. Formerly, two *hāvanas* were used at the same time: that of stone for pounding the Haoma and that of iron for producing the sound. The modern *hāvana* of copper, used as it is for both these purposes, is thus an improvement on the old stone and iron *hāvanas*.

VARESA-HAOMA-ANGHAREZANA : THE SIEVE FOR STRAINING
THE JUICE OF THE HAOMA.

A sieve is used in ceremonials for straining the Haoma. It is made of a plate of copper, brass, or other metal with nine holes. It is, therefore, called the *tashta* with holes. There is no name found in the Scriptures for the nine holes or for any vessel with holes. The word for sieve which we find is *Varesa*,¹ which means "hair". This shows that the sieve was originally made of hair. Whose hair was this? Was it the hair of men or of animals? Though nothing is stated about this in the Avesta, we find in the Pahlavi Nirangistān that the hair was taken from the mane of the horse or the tail of the bull. The hair of the one animal now utilised in ceremonies is that of a milk-white unemasculated bull. The hair is taken from the bull's tail for ceremonial purposes in a prescribed manner, and it is tied round a ringlet of metal wire. It is then called the ring of the *varesa*. From the practice of using the hair (*varesa*) of the bull, the consecrated bull for the purpose is called the *varesyā*. It becomes clear from this that originally the sieve was woven out of the hair of a bull, and that it was used to strain the juice of the Haoma.

EVIDENCE AFFORDED BY THE EXISTING CEREMONIAL. Another argument in support of the statement that the sieve was made of the hair of the bull is this that the ring of the *varesa* now in use in the Haoma ceremony recalls to us the old usage of employing the sieve of the bull's hair for the same purpose. The details of the ceremony are as under:—

In order to prepare the Haoma juice, three things are necessary—the pounding, the squeezing and the straining. There are three different recitals for those three functions. The formulæ “*Yathā tu Mazdā at moi tu*” and “*Airyamā ishyō*” are recited three times whilst pounding the Haoma. Then with the words “*Haoma pairi-hareshyante.....arshukhghanāmcha vachām*”, the pounded Haoma is pressed. After this, once again the *Hōm-sali* is pounded, for, to prevent any portion, however slight, of the Haoma remaining unpounded, the Haoma is pounded four times during the recital of four *Ahunavars*. Then the process of straining commences, and whilst reciting the words “*Ye sevishtō, us moi ujāreshwā, humata, hūkhta, hwarshta*,” the juice is separated from the pounded substance.¹ In this way, after the *Hōm-sali* is pounded and squeezed, and the final ceremony of straining it commences, the ring of the *varesa* is specially placed in the plate with holes. And then the liquid obtained on the pounding of the Haoma which is collected in two pots, is poured on to the sieve with the ring of the *varesa* in it, and is strained through it. Here ends the ceremony of straining the Haoma. The special use of the ring of the *varesa* in the last part of the Haoma ceremony shows that the sieve was originally woven out of bull's hair, and that the Haoma juice was

1. This kind of ceremony is always performed twice. The juice of the Haoma is first prepared with due ceremony before the commencement of the *Yajishna*, and it is used by the *Zaotar* as drink. The juice which is prepared during the performance of the *Yajishna* ceremony is dedicated in the end as a pious offering to water, and this act is styled the getting up of the *Zaothra*.

strained through that implement. As a relic of that time-worn practice this ring is now placed in the plate with nine holes. We find many instances like this, in which, in spite of changes having been made in the essential implements used for ceremonial purposes, traces of the original implements are still preserved. It appears that formerly a ringlet must have been prepared of some substance, and that the sieve was prepared by weaving the hair of a white bull with such a ringlet. The modern metal plate with holes is an improvement on the old uncouth sieve.

THE BARSAM: THE CONSECRATED MAT, THE DAIS AND THE BUNDLE.

The use of the Barsam was originally twofold or threefold. Its one use was as an *āldt-gāh*, *i. e.*, as a mat for placing the ceremonial implements; another as a *Zōt-gāh*, *i. e.*, as the dais for the *Zaotar*, the officiating priest; and the third as a *bundle* held in the hand. In modern ceremonies the first two uses of the Barsam are absent. There is no trace or relic of the mat or the dais. The epithet of *frastara* is to be found in the Avesta with reference to its original usage. The root of this epithet is *stere*, to spread, and the meaning of *Baresma frastareta* is "the nobly spread Barsam" or "the valuable mat of the Barsam."

We find an illustration of the double use of this consecrated mat in the Visperad, where we have a small list of ceremonial implements, and with the words *Baresma frastareta* we find the name of another implement named *stereta* which is a bed, a seat or a mat.¹ This latter implement is distinct from the former. They are both pointed out as ceremonial implements placed before the officiating priest with the demonstrative adjective *īm*, *i. e.*, this. Anyhow, both these implements were in use in ceremonies as materials for spreading, and they were utilised for placing on them in order, the ceremonial implements, or as two consecrated mats for the officiating

¹ Visperad XI, 1.

priest to sit on.

We find two historical instances of the Barsam. Herodotus says that a certain kind of grass was spread in the ceremony of sacrificing animals; on that grass the flesh of the victim was placed, and on it the Magian recited prayers for some time. Strabo says that the flesh of the victim was placed on the leaves of a certain tree which were spread out in a particular way and that the Magians there recited certain prayers, holding the twigs of a certain tree in their hand.

These two instances are evidence of the usage of the Barsam described in the Avesta as something—grass or leaves—spread out for putting thereon ceremonial implements. Besides, we see here the use, at one and the same time, of two things—grass and the twig of a tree. This recalls to us the double usage of the Barsam, the one of having it spread out, the other of its being held in the hand.

We find the words “*Urvard baresmanaya*” to denote the Barsam-dais, and this shows that it was prepared out of some tree. That material is none else than the leaf of the date tree which is now wound round the Barsam. The reasons of this are remarkable. The leaf of the date tree is interwoven in a particular manner, and then wound round the Barsam. And, as a relic of the old usage of preparing a mat woven out of the same fabric, we have now the practice of winding it round the Barsam. The so-called “*Aividonghan*” which is wound round the Barsam reminds us of

¹ We find the word *stercta* used in many places in the Avesta to denote a bed and from this word we have the vernacular name *sādro* to denote the bedding of the priest undergoing the Bareshnum. We get from its Sanskrit equivalent *star* the Gujarati word *stād*, a mat. From this also it appears that the proper meaning of *baresma frastareta* was the mat of Barsam or the bed of Barsam—these two being originally ceremonial accessories used as the *ādāt gah* and the *ādāt gāh*.

the Barsam-dais which was a fabric woven out of the same or a similar substance—the leaf of the date tree—which now forms the “*Aividonghan*”. This leads us to the inference that the stone bench called the *ālāt-gāh* on which the ceremonial implements are placed, and the stone dais which is the seat of the officiating priest, are the modern substitutes for what were formerly the mat woven out of the fibres of the date leaf.

THE DAIS OF THE MOBAD AND OF THE BRAHMIN.

Just as we find a special seat at ceremonial functions reserved for the Mobad, so is there a consecrated dais mentioned of the Brahmins. This dais was specially reserved originally for the “*Sandhyā karma*” and the “*Yagna*” ceremonies. The material from which this was made was called “*Darbhā*”. This is the name of a species of grass. The Brahmins of to-day prepare a mat of deer-skin or of wool, or of a grass called *dābhādā*. This is called the *darbhāsan* or the dais of the *darbhā* in imitation of the original *darbhāsan*. There are some Brahmins who say that the *dābhādā* out of which the mat is prepared was originally called the *darbhā*.

BUNDLE OF THE BARSAM TWIGS.

Just as we have the words *baresma frastareta* for the Barsam which is spread out, we have the words *Baresmā-zasta* for the Barsam held in the hand, although, to be sure, the former phrase is found much oftener than the latter. Indeed, after the practice of spreading out a Barsam had ceased, the words *Baresma frastareta* were used likewise to denote the Barsam held in the hand. Thus the third signification of the Barsam is that of a bundle which the Mobads hold up in their hands during the recital of their prayers. There is a difference in the materials used now and formerly for the bundle. At present the Barsam is made of pieces of matal wire called *tāe*, but, originally, it consisted of the

twigs of same tree. Although the name of no particular tree is found in the Avesta, the words *urvarā baresmanaya* show that, like the Barsam-dais, the bundle of the Barsam must have been formed out of some tree, and, according to later book, it consisted of the twigs of the pomegranate tree. The number of these twigs in 3, 5, 7 and 9, and the measure of their length is given as "reaching up to the knee and the middle of the leg."¹ The number and the measure mentioned in the Avesta do not agree with what we find in modern practice, with the exception of the numbers 5 and 7. At present the bundle is made of 35, 23, 15, 7 and 5, and its length is never greater than a span.

That the Barsam was obtained from a particular tree is directly proved from a passage in the Vendidad. In answer to a question of Zarathushtra addressed to Ahura Mazda as to how the good creation should be praised, he is advised to cut off the Barsam from a "beautiful, living and strong tree" in the act of reciting certain prayers.² Although, at present, the use of the Barsam got out of the twigs of a tree has ceased, yet we find even in comparatively recent works a description of the ceremony, in which the Barsam is to be cut from the tree. It is stated in those books that the leaves and knots of as many slender twigs as are required for the Barsam should be cleared off from the pomegranate tree, and thereafter, the twigs should be cut off with proper ceremony. The texts which are enjoined to be recited as part of the ceremony in those books are the same as the recitals enjoined in the Vendidad.

The verb used with the term *baresmō-zasta*, i. e., the Barsam held in the hand, is *hishta*, to stand. This shows that the bundle of the Barsam was held up *erect* in the hand.

EVIDENCE AFFORDED BY EXTANT CEREMONIES. The words *baresmō-zasta* are found also in Yasna LXII, which deals with the praise of the fire. This shows that prayers were formerly addressed to fire and other natural objects with the Barsam in hand. The practice of consecrating some one or other natural object as a holy emblem has been preserved unchanged to this day. Although in the great *Yajishna* and other *pāv-mehel* ceremonies, the Barsam is usually kept on its seat called the *Māhā-rue*, yet immediately before the recitals of those texts which deal with the praise of the fire, the sun and the waters, the priest takes the Barsam in his hand, stands up from the *Zōt-gāh*, and, in a standing posture, turning towards that particular natural object whose praise he recounts, he celebrates its praise. This celebration over, he replaces the Barsam in its place and resumes his seat. Just as we have the words *baresmō-zasta* to indicate this act of holding the Barsam in hand, so we have the words *aesmō-zasta*, *gao-zastō*, *gaomata-zasta-vustravata*, and *hāvanō-zastō* to indicate that fuel, milk, cloth, and the mortar are to be held up in the hand at particular times in the course of the performance of the ceremony.

The practice of making up the Barsam from the twigs of a tree is very old. Strabo says that the Magians held a bunch of twigs in their hands whilst reciting their holy prayers.

TWIGS USED IN CEREMONIES BY MOBADS AND BY BRAHMINS.

The twigs of trees which the Brahmins use in the *yagna* ceremony are called *samidha*, a word which corresponds with the Avestic *hamidha*. In the Farvardin Yasht, the *Mānθra-vākā* i. e., the reciter of the *Mānθras*, is called an *aethra-paiti*, and a *hamidha-paiti*,¹ i. e., an *Ervad* and "Lord of the Barsam." In the

Avesta we find the word *yakhshти*¹ for twig, which corresponds with the Sanskrit *ishika*. The number of twigs mentioned in Brahmin Scriptures is 8, 28, and 108, and the measure of length is said to be twelve fingers' breadth which is about the size of a span. There is a wide difference in the use made of these twigs by Mobads and by Brahmins. Whereas the latter throw the branches into the fire, the Mobads hold them up in their hand without destroying them. Again, the Brahmins throw into the fire, in addition to the *samidha*, ghee, barley and other substances which they call *dhuti*, a word which corresponds with the Avestic *azuiti*. We see from all this that the Barsam of metal wire now in use is an improvement on the original Barsam of twigs.

AIVIAONGHAN: THE DAIS AND THE TYING MATERIAL.

This implement had originally a twofold use. It was used firstly, as the Barsam-dais, and secondly, as the means of tying up the Barsam bundle. From the etymology of the word we find that one of its meanings is a *seat* from the root *aongh*, equivalent to the Sanskrit *as*, to sit. The suffix *ana* being added to the root in both the languages, we get in the Avesta the word *aonghana* and in Sanskrit *asana*, a seat. The prefix *avi* being superadded to the Avesta word, and idea of dignity or exaltation is attached to the *aividonghan*. The winding of the fibres of the date leaf round the Barsam in a peculiar manner, is called *aividonghan*. It appears that originally the Barsam-dais was made by interweaving the fibres of the date leaf, and, in order to preserve a reminiscence of that usage, it is now wound round the Barsam.

THE TYING MATERIAL.

In extant ceremonials, another use of the *aividonghan* is as a tying material. The substance from which it is obtained is the date leaf which is first divided into six fibres. These fibres are formed into two parts, and their ends being twisted into each other

by turns, a knot is added at both ends. This method of weaving the fibres around the barsam bundle is called the *aividonghan*. An explanation of this use of the word can be obtained from its root *dongh* which has also the signification of tying. We have in the Avestâ its opposite, the word *bilj*, Sanskrit *bhûj*, which means to unite. In the Hormazd Yasht we find “*airidonghanem vâ aividonghâyamno aividonghanem vâ bujayamnô, i. e.*,” tying the *aividonghan* and untying the *aividonghan*.” We thus see that this word is a homonym having the double meaning of a “dais” and a “tying material”. Its use as a dais has now ceased, but its use as a tying material is still in vogue.

AIVIAONGHAN AND THE WAIST-GIRDLE CALLED THE KUSHTI :
A COMPARISON.

The word *aividonghan* is also interpreted to denote the Kushti by our Dasturs. The suggestion is very plausible. The connection of these two materials is remarkable. We notice a good deal of correspondence in the prayers and the ceremonies relating to the *aividonghan* of the Barsam and the Kushti :—

- (a) Just as the ceremony of tying or winding the *aividonghan* is performed *round* the Barsam, so is the ceremony of tying the Kushti performed *round* the waist.
- (b) Just as *three* knots of the *aividonghan* are tied *round* the Barsam, so are *three* knots of the Kushti tied *round* the waist.
- (c) Just as the front knots of the *aividonghan* are tied whilst reciting the word *shyothnandm* in the two *ahunavars* that are recited, so are the front knots of the Kushti tied with the recital of the same word.
- (d) There is a difference in the recital of the texts repeated whilst tying the hind knots of the Kushti and of the *aividonghan*, and there are reasons for the same, The hind knot of the *aividonghan*

is tied with the recital of the words *shyothnandm* of the two *ahunavars* of Yasna XIII, and the hind knot of the Kushti is tied during the recital of the *Ashem Vohū*. The two chapters of Yasna XII and XIII are *Fraoreti Hāiti*, i. e., chapters relating to the confession of faith. That is why after tying the last knot of the Kushti with the *Ashem Vohū*, a portion of that chapter relating to the confession of faith, and beginning with the words *jasa me avanghe Mazda* is recited at the end.

(e) Just as the ends of the *aividonghan* are twisted round one another, so are the ends of the Kushti twisted into each other.

(f) Just as after the hind knot of the *aividonghan* is tied, two ends are left visible, so the two ends of the Kushti are also left visible.

(g) Just as the leaf of the date tree is torn into six fibres in order to interweave them for the purposes of the *aividonghan*, so the 72 threads of the woollen Kushti are first divided into six parts of 12 each, before the two ends are woven up.

Many other points of similarity, though rather remote, are to be seen in the ritual pertaining to these two. The agreement of the *aividonghan* with the Kushti affords an indirect support to the meaning of the word as a “tying material.”

HADHANAEPATA: THE ROOT OF THE POMEGRANATE TREE AND FUEL.

This substance also had originally a twofold use—one as the root of the pomegranate tree which was dedicated as an offering to water, and the other as a sweet-scented fuel to be offered to the fire. The word *haddnaepata* is, like the names of many other implements, a bone of controversy amongst Avestan scholars. The late Ervad Kanga and other scholars do not assign it any meaning, only transcribing it as a proper noun. The late Prof. C. de Harlez translated it as “the twigs of the Hadhānaepata.”

This substance is the name of an implement of two ceremonies having different aims. The word *urvard* is found with it, and from this we can say without doubt that it belongs to the class of trees. It is, in fact, the name of the famous pomegranate tree. For, in the Avesta the name is often used especially in connection with the Haoma plant and *Jivām*, i. e., milk. As a common epithet applied to the three, we have the word *uzdāta* which signifies a rising or a raising up. Just as in the Avesta we find the names of these three substances used in juxtaposition, so we notice in the extant ceremonials that the object used with the Haoma plant and milk to give force to the beverage after the Haoma is pounded and squeezed, is the root of the pomegranate tree. The Mobads call it *urvarām*. The word is used only once as a proper noun in the Vendidad.¹

EVIDENCE AFFORDED BY THE EXTANT CEREMONIAL. That the root of the pomegranate tree is the *urvard* of *hadhānaepata* is seen from the extant ritual of the Haoma and Yasna ceremonies. In both these ceremonies, at the time of reciting certain words from Yas. XXIV, the Zaotar has to keep his eyes fixed on certain implements placed before him. In reciting the words *imāmchā urvarām hadhānnepatām ashaya uzdātām* the eye is fixed on the root of the pomegranate tree which is present there. Again, whilst reciting certain words from Yasna XXV, certain implements are listed up from their place, and the ceremony of placing them in the mortar for the purpose of pounding, squeezing, and straining them is gone through. Reciting the identical sentence just quoted, the priest lifts the root of the pomegranate known as *urvarām* and places it in the mortar. These two examples from extant ceremonies show that the *hadhānaepata* is the root of the pomegranate tree, which was, and is, used in ceremonials.

THE SWEET-SCENTED FUEL

The second use of the *hadhānaepata* was as a sweet-scented fuel. In the *vendidād* it is recommended that as a penance for certain offences, sweet-scented fuel should be presented as an offering to the fire, and we find the names particularly of the trees *Urvāsna*, *Vohūgaona*, *Vohūkereti*, and *Hadhānaepata*.¹ According to the explanation we have given above, the last is the pomegranate tree. From the *Vendidād* its twofold use becomes clear. Two different reasons for the two uses are also given. It is a substance to be presented as an offering to objects in nature, and it is used as an object of offering to the fire and the waters. When the name is used in connection with the words *haoma*, *gaoma* in the sense of the root of the tree, it is in reference to the offering to the waters, and when used with *urvāsna*, etc., it has reference to the fire offering.² Therefore, according to this explanation, when the term *hadhānaepata* occurs in connection with the *haoma* and *gaoma*, it must be translated as the root of the pomegranate tree; and when it occurs with *urvāsna*, etc., it must be translated as sweet-scented fuel.

Like the date tree the pomegranate tree is held important in the religious books. When yet green, the juice of its root serves the purpose of a drink for the *Zaotar*, and is also used as an offering to the waters in the *Yasna* and other important ceremonials. Besides, in the *Bareshnūm*, the *Navzot*, and other ablution ceremonies, the juice of its leaves is given for drink. When the tree withers away, its dry wood was used as a sweet-scented fuel. Thus in ancient times the *hadhānaepata* received a twofold and even a threefold use. At present, the root of this famous tree and its foliage is made use of for ceremonial purposes in Persia. But the use of the dry wood of the tree as a sweet-scented fuel is entirely forgotten.

¹ Farg. XVIII, 71.

² Farg. XIV, 2-4.

HAURVATA-AMERETATA, GAUSH-HUDHAO, DARUN, AND GOSHUDO.

In the Avesta we find the two words *draona* and *draonangha* for *darun*. The corrupted form of the Avesta is the Pahlavi and modern Persian *darun*, and although it is now used as an important element in ceremonials, yet this word is not to be found in all the places in the Avesta where the names of ceremonial implements are given. We find the names of the principal ceremonial implements in Chapter 3, 4, 6, 7, and 8 of the Yasna, but we do not find any such name as *darun*. I believe that the words *Haurvata-Ameretata* are used for the *darun*. These names are Gâthic concepts, which, later on, have been taken as Amshâspends presiding over the waters and vegetation. According to the *Patet Pashimâni*, the latter name is “*Amerdâd urvar urvar sardegân*”, i. e., the Amshâspend Amerdâd presides over all kinds of trees. According to this idea, the two words are used for the *darun* made out of corn and water. Here and elsewhere in the Avesta we often find these abstract words used for concrete materials. The words which precede and follow these names in Yas. III, VII, and VIII, are respectively “*Kharethem myazdem*” and “*Gâush-hudhao*.” These are names of eatables. The abstract terms used between them may, therefore, without fear of mistake, be taken to represent the *darun*.

EVIDENCE AFFORDED BY THE EXTANT CEREMONIAL. In support of this explanation, we have an important example in an extant ceremony performed by the Mobads. Before the commencement of the *Yajashne* and other *pâr-mwâl* ceremonies, the complete accessories of the ceremonies are kept in preparation. If the *darun* and the *goshudo* are not kept ready on the *âlât-gâh* with the other accessories, from the very beginning, these must be necessarily kept ready after the completion of the recital of the first two

Hâs of the Yasna. There are four principal reasons for this. Firstly, in these two *Hâs* the names *darun* and *goshudo* do not occur, so that nothing improper happens if they are absent. Secondly in the third *Hâ* the words *Haurvata-Ameretâta* and *Gâush-hudhâo* are recited with the names of other ceremonial implements. Hence the *darun* and *goshudo* are kept in readiness before the commencement of the third *Hâ* because the names have to be recited in the presence of the objects. The Zaotar sits quiet if necessary, until these things are produced on the *âlât-gâh*. Thirdly, so long as these things are kept in front, the words *Haurvata amere-tâta gâush-hudhâo* continue to be recited in Yasna 3, 4, 6, 7, and 8; but at the end of the eighth chapter when they are removed from the *âlât-gâh* after the Zaotar has tasted of them, these words are no longer recited. Lastly, during the recital of Yasna 22, 24, and 25, these conjoint words are not recited with the names of other ceremonial implements, because the implements to which they refer are absent. These weighty reasons from the extant ritual show clearly that the expressions *Haurvata-Ameretâta Gâush-hudhâo* are used for *darun* and *goshudo*. These abstract words are found also in the Gâthâs to denote food, as divine nectar and ambrosia : *At tōi ubे Haurrâoschâ Kharethâi à Ameretâoschâ*, i. e., "Really, Thine two, Khordâd (water) and Amerdâd (vegetation) are for eating." ¹ Again, in another passage in the Gâthâs, these abstract words are found used with the very word *draono*, i. e., *darun* : " *Dât ve Ameretâoscha utauiti Haurvatâs draono*," i. e., " Give Ye the strong *darun* of Khordâd (entirety) and Amerdâd (immortality)". ²

Although the direct meaning of this sentence may not be the *darun* of Khordâd and Amerdâd, and although, to be sure, there may be underlying in it some deeper and higher idea, yet its ordi-

1 Yas. XXXIV, 11.

2 Yas. XXXIII, 8.

nary meaning is not widely different from the expression I have given. From the two Gāthic sentences we can see, at least, this that there is authority for the use of the words *Haurvata Ameretāta* for *darun* in the Avesta.

In the *Hādokht Nask* the recital of one *Ashem Vohu* in season is considered equal to the recital of the same formula numerous times on other occasions. There, the above abstract words are used with reference to eatables to denote the principal object of food, and the angel presiding thereon. Although the idea sought to be expressed is that of ordinary food, still these words are used to express pure and excellent ideal food: " *Yō nā franghuharena Haurvatbya Ashem staoiti*", *i. e.*, " Whoso praises *Ashem* whilst taking food and drink."¹ Just as here these words are used to represent the best food, so in this same *Nask* pounded haoma is given an importance as the type of another kind of holy food. There an *Ashem* recited after partaking of the *haoma* food is held of great value.²

These two examples lend great support to the Zoroastrian practice of saying grace before and after meals in thanksgiving to Ahura Mazda. Besides, we find in the *Zamyād Yasht* that as the angels contending against hunger and thirst and against the *Daevas* presiding over the distresses consequent thereon, the names of *Khordād* and *Amerdād* are given.³

The learned scholar Ervad Sheriarji Bharucha has given a weighty explanation regarding the *darun*. According to him, it was, at first, a holy liquid like the juice of the haoma. For, we find in the *Vendidād* " *Haomake hutake dadhātē usefritinām vā myazdanām*, *i. e.*, " The pounded haoma or the *aostofarid Myazda* (he) gives."⁴ The literal translation of this is found in the *Patet Pashimāni* thus: " *Hōm darun aostofarid*

myasddn nehldeh ⁵.⁶ The Avestan words *haoma huta* have been translated as *hōm darun* in the Pazend sentence. In the extant ritual the *haoma* is used as a liquid and the *darun* as a solid element of food. But on an examination of the root of the words *huta* and *darun*, it appears that they were at first both liquid substances. The root of the former *hu* in the Avesta, corresponding with the Pahlavi *hūnidan*, means, to squeeze, to press out the juice. The latter is the Avestic *draona*, corresponding with the Vedic *drōnas* from the root *dru*, to flow, to melt. From this it appears that a change has come about in the signification of the word *draona* which was at first some liquid substance. At present it is the name of the holy cake, unseasoned by any effervescent liquid. It is consecrated in honour of Ahura Mazda and the angels and thereafter partaken of.

GAUSH-HUDHAO : GOSHUDO.

The word quoted above with the word *darun* was *gāush-hudhāo* from which we derive the name of the well known ceremonial

5 I think it necessary to comment here on this sentence occurring in the Vendidād and the Patet Pashimāni. In all the books of the Khordeh Avesta this Fazend sentence is wrongly printed as “*Hōm darun hosh farid yazdān nehlā*, i. e., “the *darun* of the *haoma* and the things prescribed for the adoration of the *Yazads*”. As the sentence is incorrect, its original meaning is changed. The mistake is owing to the difficulty of deciphering and reading the Pahlavi characters which admit of several readings at one and the same time. The word *Yazdān* stands for the word *Myazdān* as we see from corresponding sentence in the Vendidād. The Pahlavi word *Myazda* is written in two ways. When the *m* of the word is removed the word exactly agrees with *Yazdān*. The Avesta *haoma huta* becomes *darun* in the Pazend, *dadhūti* becomes *nehlā*, *usefīti* becomes *aostofarid* and *Myazdāndām* becomes not *Yazdān* but *myazdān*. So that the correct version in the Pazend of this sentence should be, “*hom darun aostofarid myazdān nehlādeh*”, i. e., “the *darun* of the *haoma*, and the appointed *aostofarid myazda*. In the passage in the Patet Pashimani where this sentence occurs, six duties are enjoined, and one of them is regarding the *myazda*. Similarly in the corresponding passage in the Patet Irani we find the duty relating to the *myazda* coupled with that regarding the *aostofarid* and the *darun*. From this it appears that what was originally a “holy offering” has been converted by mistake into something pertaining to the *Yazads*.

implement, the *goshudo*. It is the name of a dainty prepared from the ghee made of the milk of the cow, and it is always placed on the *darun*. Just as we always find the use of the *darun* and the *goshudo* together in ceremonials, so in the Avesta we always find the words *Haurvata Ameretāta* placed in juxtaposition with *gāush-hudhāo*. Nowhere in the Avesta are the names *Haurvata Ameretāta*, when used in the sense of the *darun*, separated from the term *gāush-hudhāo*. But when they are found alone, they do not signify the *darun* or the *goshudo*. The mutual connection of these two objects proves beyond doubt that the words *Haurvata Ameretāta* represent the *darun*, and the words *gāush-hudhāo*, the *goshudo*.

The term *gaush-hudhāo* admits of several meanings, and there is a difference of opinion among scholars regarding its exact meaning. The name is met with twice in Yasna IV, where it is rendered as *gospend-i-hūdānāk* by the Pahlavi translator. Ervad Kanga translates both these nouns as *gashudo*. But Spiegel and Harlez give the two different meaning of "oxen of good breed" and "flesh meat", and that is, in my opinion, a proper way of interpretation. Again, both Kanga and Harlez translate the same word as *goshudo* where it occurs in Yasna XXIV, but that meaning does not suit the context. It should there be taken as "cattle of good breed." For we do not find the conjoint phrase *Haurvata Ameretāta*, i. e., *darun*, used with it. The plain meaning of this becomes clear from the modern ritual.

EVIDENCE AFFORDED BY THE EXTANT CEREMONIAL. During the recital of Yasna XXIV, both the *darun* and the *goshudo* are not present before the priest, as at the end of the eighth *Hā* the Zaotar tastes thereof, and after that they are removed from the *ālāt-gāh*. Therefore, it is not proper to translate the words *gāush-hudhāonghem* as *goshudo*. This principle is found

clearly joined with the prayers recited at ceremonials, that the names only of those implements are mentioned which are present on the *dlāt-gdh*, and those that are not present are not named. For instance, in the ceremonial for straining the haoma, when the abovenamed *Hās* XXIV and XXV are recited, the phrase *imāmchā gām jīvām ashaya uzdātām* is omitted. That is because the *jīvām* (milk) is not present at the time. But when these chapters are recited in the *Yajashne* ceremonial, this phrase is also recited, because milk is present at the time.

From all these facts we can prove beyond doubt that it is only when those conjoint words occur side by side, are they to be translated as *darun* and *goshudo*. But when they occur separately, the first phrase does not signify *darun*, but *Khordād* (entirety) and *Amerdād* (immortality); and the second denotes not *goshudo* but "cattle of the good creation."

ANIMAL SACRIFICE : THE CHANGES AND IMPROVEMENTS MADE IN IT.

The ancient Iranians used to offer innocent creatures as a sacrifice to the Yazads. The *gāush-hulhāo*, *i. e.*, ghee, and the *gām jīvām*, *i. e.*, milk, and the other implements now in vogue in the *yajashne* ceremonial are only an improvement on the cruel practice of sacrificing four-footed animals. As a consequence of this improvement, it was found necessary later on, and especially in the Sāssānian times, to change the root meaning of the names of certain ceremonial implements and other proper nouns, whilst the names themselves were retained. Principal amongst these are the *yasna*, *saothra*, *myazda*, *goshudo*, *jīvām*, ect.

THE YASNA : OFFERING.

The Avestic *Yasna* corresponds with the Vedic *Yagnā* which is the name of the sacrificial ceremony which was in vogue among the Brahmins. We find in the Avesta and the Vedas a description of many such *Yagnas*. There is, for instance, the *Ashwamegha yagnā*,

the name for the horse sacrifice which was common amongst the Brahmins. In a similar way, the ancient Iranians used to offer horses, bulls and goats as a sacrifice to the Yazads.¹ The representative of the Avestic *Yasna* in the Pahlavi and modern Persian is *Yajishn*. Its root meaning is that of *worship*, yet, later on, the original name being retained, an improvement is made in this respect that it is used in the good sense of adoring and praising. It may be noted that to represent the idea of adoring and praising we have in the Pahlavi and modern Persian the word *setdishn* from the Avestic root *stu*, as well as the word *niydyishn* from the same root as *Yasna* with the prefix *ni* superadded, and we have also the word *zbâishn* from the root *sbe*.

ZAOTHRA : CEREMONIAL IMPLEMENTS.

The Avestic *saothra* corresponds with the Sanskrit *hotra*. Its root meaning is that of sacrifice, and it is frequently found used in the Avesta in connection with the ceremony for sacrificing animals.² The original name being retained, its meaning has been changed at a later stage, and the word now signifies the innocent ceremonial implements and holy offerings, like ghee, milk, food, water, etc. Especially in the *Yajishna* ceremony, the holy water prepared from the juice obtained by pounding, squeezing and straining the *haoma* with the *hadhânaepata* to which juice some milk is added, is called by the special appellation of *Zor* or *Zaothra*. This beverage *Zor* is held in great importance especially in the Pahlavi books. It is found collected in the first pot on the *âlât-gâh* to the right of the *Zaotar*.

MYAZDA : GREEN AND DRY FRUIT.

Philologists translate the Avestic *myazda* as flesh-meat, and we find in the Vendidad the sentence “*myazdemgaomantem madhumzntem*” which means “the *myazda* of flesh and liquor.”³

¹ *Vide* Ahan Yt.

² Tishtar Yt. 56, etc.

³ Farg. VIII, 22,

In the Yasna this noun is used in the sense of a holy offering for the *darun*, the *goshudo*, the *haoma*, and the *para-haoma*. Although we find in the Avesta the word *bara* for fruit, it, the original meaning of *myazda*, has been changed to denote the innocent offering of green and dry fruits, such as we find used in the *Afringān* and *bāj* ceremonies.

GOSHUDO : GHEE.

The Avestic *gāush-hudhāo* means literally "cattle of the good creation". Harlez and other scholars interpret it as the "flesh of the cow." Under the belief that the word denotes flesh-meat there has originated the custom of preparing minced meat balls which are placed as an offering in the *bāj* ceremony, in place of the *goshudo*. Although this gives an idea of the old, old times when the custom of offering animal sacrifices was prevalent, we now find only ghee used in modern ceremonies. We do, indeed, find the word *raoghna* in the Avesta, corresponding with the Pahlavi and modern Persian *royhan*, to denote ghee, yet the word *goshudo* is now interpreted to mean ghee, which is all that is now used where *goshudo* is mentioned in the old books.

JIVAM : MILK.

The literal meaning of the Avestic *gām jīvām* is "live cattle." Pro. Harlez and other translators have interpreted it as "fresh cut meat". *Jivām* comes from the root *ji*, to live, and it is an adjective used as a noun. Although we find the word *payangh* in the Avesta corresponding with the Sanskrit *payas* to denote the milk of an animal, yet the word *jivām* is now interpreted to mean milk as a precious object of nutrition for life.

THE RASHNU YASHT AND THE BRAHMANIC YAGNA CEREMONIAL : A COMPARISON.

In the Avesta different objects are named as fit offerings to different Yazads. The sacrifice offered to Abān and Drvāsp consisted of animals and cattle; to Haoma was offered a specific portion

of an animal; a similar offering was made to Fire and Water; and to Tishtar and Behrām was offered a small, fine animal. Just as offerings of animals were made to some angels, so to others corn preparations were dedicated. In the Yasht literature we find a description of the delicious corn preparations offered to the Yazads Rashnu, Vayu, Adar and Abān. Although nowadays no particular offerings are made to particular Yazads, the recital of the *Satûm* in the presence of flesh and corn dishes, now in vogue, recalls to us the ancient practice of offering flesh and corn dishes to the Yazads.

A description is found in the Rashnu Yasht of the special offerings of corn preparations made to Rashnu. We are given there the names of four distinct objects, *varô-usdâtem*, *perenâm-vighzhârayeintim*, *raoghnyâm-varanghem* and *âzuitim urvarâm*. A good deal of difference of opinion exists among scholars regarding the meaning of these terms. Prof. Darmesteter considers the term *varô varanghem* to mean "an ordeal". Dr. Haug says that adorations to Rashnu were made in accompaniment with fruit and ghee placed before the fire. I believe that these terms are the names of the particular objects which the ancient Irânians used to offer to the Yazads, and they correspond to the objects sacrificed to the Daevas in the *yagna* ceremonials of the Brahmins. They are the dainty dishes called *dudhpâk*, *puri*, *vâlân*, *bâkrâ* and *shrifal*, which were poured into the fire at the end of the *Yagna* ceremony. We have the following passage in point in the Rasnu Yasht :—

Aetat té jasâni avunghê azem yô Ahurô Masdao

Avi imat varô usdatem avi âtaremcha baresmacha

Avi perenâm-vighzhârayeintim avi raoghnyâm varanghem

Azuitimcha urvaranâm.

i.e., "I who am Ahura Mazda will come to thee for assistance towards (the offering of) the *vadi* seasoned with an effervescent

substance, towards the fire and the Barsam, towards the overflowing *dudhpák*, towards the *vadán* fried in oil, and towards the *shrijal* of trees."

PERENA-VIGHZHARAYA—DUDHIPAK (PURI).

On examining the etymology of the term *perena-vighzháraya* we find that it is the name of a delicacy prepared out of milk. The root of the Avesta *ghzháraya* is *ghzhár* or *khshár*, equivalent to the Sanskrit *kshár*, to flow or to curdle, and from that root we derive the modern Persian *shér*, milk. The Avesta *ghzháraya*, then, must mean, "made of milk", or "a preparation from milk". Again, from the Persian word *shér* we have the Gujarati *khír* which is the name given to a preparation from milk which is not sweetened with sugar. Anyhow, *ghzháraya* appears to be the name of some delicacy, and that is clearly proved from the Vendidad. The name is there found in the midst of a list of objects for dedication to the fire, and it is there explained as *kharetha*, "eatable", or rather, as "*khásta kharetha*", "a delicious eatable".¹ We find with the name we are discussing, the adjective *perena*. If we take it as a noun, we may interpret it as *puranpoli* or *puranyán* or *puri*, all names of delicious eatables, and *perena-vighzháraya* would then mean *puri dudhpák* or something like it. We find *perena* named in the Vendidad as one of the delicious eatables to be dedicated to the fire, and the now prevailing custom of making offerings of delicious eatables to the fire and water amongst Parsis, lends support to my humble attempt to interpret the Avesta phrase as I do. The dedications to fire and water are technically called by the names of *fuláru* and *palli* respectively.

¹ Vide Vendidad, XIX, 40: *Khásta kharethdo frabaroish perenam vighzhárayeintim*, i. e., "Thou shalt carry the delicious dainty of plenty of *dudhpák*".

RAOGHNYA VARANGHA—VADAN FRIED IN OIL.

Another object of dedication is *raoghnya varangha*. *Varangha* may be compared to the *vadân* of the Brahmins. *Vadân* is an eatable prepared from the flour of certain kinds of grain and fried in oil. As the eatable has to be fried, we have in the Avesta the term *raoghnya*, equivalent to the Pahlavi and Persian *raoghan*, one of whose meanings is “oil”. That is why I suggest that *raoghnya varangha* denotes “*vadân* fried in oil”.

We find an enjoinder to prepare *vadân* during the *Gahmbârs* in the same way as the eatable was, of old, dedicated to the *Yazad Rashnu*. We have in the *Atrîngân-i-Gahmbâr* the phrase *garemô varaanghem dasti antare Mazdayasnâish*, which suggest that the faithful should partake of hot *vadân* after they are consecrated. Although, at first sight, it appears to be a new thing to count such an article of food as an object of dedication, yet we are as ignorant of the antiquity of the custom which is now in vogue amongst us, as we are about the significance of the phrases. During the *Far-vardeghân* days, it is a common practice to prepare cakes of rice flour in oil, and to place them together with other eatables before the reciter of the *Satûm* prayer.

VARANGHA UZDATEM—SEASONED VADI.

The name of the third offering is *varô* which is the same as *varangha*. The former is neuter, the latter masculine. We have the *vadân* and *vadi* as names of two different delicacies among Hindus. *Vadi* is a preparation made of the flour of gram seasoned with pepper and the like, in various shapes, resembling the pawns of chess. It is common to season the preparation, before it is fried, with some effervescent substance, and we have in the Avesta the term *uzdâta* coupled with *varô* to give expression to a similar practice of seasoning the preparation. *Varô uzdâtem*, then, would signify *vadi* seasoned with an effervescent substance.

AZUITI URVARA—THE AZUITI OF A TREE.

The name of the fourth offering is *azuitim urvarandm*. The former of these two words denotes fat and the like, but its use here with the noun *urvard* shows that it is something pertaining to trees. I compare it with the *shrisul* used in the *Yagna* ceremonial of Brahmins. The Brahmins cast *shrisul* into the fire at the end of the *Yagna* ceremony, and this act is called *purnahuti*. Parallel to this term in the Rashnu Yasht is the term *azuiti*. The two terms are quite alike. The only difference lies in the additional prefix *purna* in the former word, which points to the completion of the ceremony. But that prefix is not coupled with the Avesta word, because the offering does not come at the end of the ceremony, as in the Hindu custom. In the *Yasna* ceremony the last offering is that made to water, and it consists of the strained juice of the *haoma* and *hadhūndepata* mixed with milk. I suggest, therefore, that the meaning of *azuiti urvard* is "fruit of trees" or dry fruit.

There is a difference in the use made by Mobads and by Brahmins of the things dedicated in the *Yasna* and *Yagna* ceremonials. Whereas the Brahmins cast most of them in the fire, the Mobads use them as holy food to be partaken of after consecration. For there is the strongest prohibition against burning in the fire anything but dry wood and fuel of sweet scent.

THE NUMBER OF MOBADS : THEIR RANK : CHANGES IN THEM.

At present only two Mobads perform the *Yasna* ceremony. But internal evidence from the Avesta shows that formerly there were eight priests who officiated in the ceremony. They had different functions, and each one did his work according to his rank.

The titles of the eight Mobads and their functions were as under :—

1. The *zaotar* was the head officiating priest.
2. The *hāvanān* was in charge of the *haoma* ceremonial.
3. The *ātarerakhsha* kept the fire burning.
4. The *fraberetar* had to bring in and take away ceremonial implements.
5. The *āberetar* brought in and carried away the *zōr*, i. e., the water prepared ceremoniously,

6. The *asndatar* washed and cleansed the ceremonial implements.
7. The *rathvishkara* arranged and placed the ceremonial implements in proper order.
8. The *sraoshāvareza* was the chastiser who corrected mistakes.

THE SEATS OF MOBADS.

Different seats were assigned to these eight Mobads, according to their rank, and they used to be in their proper seats which were arranged thus:—

SOUTH

(8) *Sraoshāvareza*

(6) *Asndatar*

(3) *Atarevakhsha*

EAST

(7) *Rathvishkara*

WEST

(4) *Fraberetar*

Alât gah

Zôt-gâh

(5) *Aberetar*

(2) *Hâvanân*

(1) *Zaotar.*

NORTH

THE NEED OF THE PRESENCE OF EIGHT MOBADS.

The necessity for eight officiating priests is evidenced from the third chapter of the Visperad. There the head officiating priest, the *zaotar*, takes, as it were, the roll-call of his seven assistant Mobads. In modern times, with the exception of the *âtarevakhsha* there is no one present, and hence, in the course of the ceremonial, he leaves his seat and assuming different positions, one after another, he answers, "I am here". For instance, the *zaotar* says, "*hávanánem ástya*", *i. e.*, "Is the *hávanán* here?" The *âtarevakhsha* immediately appears at the place marked (2) above, and says, "*azem visát*", *i. e.*, "I am here". It is clear from this that the other positions are meant to be occupied by other officiating priests. But in their absence, in modern ceremonies, it is the *âtarevakhsha* who jumps about from one place to another and answers the roll-call for himself and his six absent confrères.

DIFFERENT TEXTS TO BE RECITED BY THE DIFFERENT PRIESTS.

Eight Mobads were elected for the ceremony, and different texts were fixed for their recital. The seven parts of Yasna LVIII in the Visperad have to be recited by the seven assistants of the *zaotar*. But they are not present in modern ceremonies. Hence the *âtarevakhsha* alone recites them all. His own portion he recites from his proper place, (3) in the above table, and the other portions he recites severally from the other six positions for his absent confrères. This shows that the other six seats are meant for the other six officials of the ceremony, and that the texts recited from those positions by the *âtarevakhsha* were meant to be recited by them severally. The *zaotar* sits quiet after reciting in Yasna LVIII abovenamed, the passage from *tat shóidhish* upto *charekeremahi*, and then the *âtarevakhsha* recites the seven portions of the rest of the chapter from different places, for himself and the absent officials, as given in the following table, where the figures show the order in which the texts are recited:—

(3) *Sraoshâvareza* : *Hé châ.....thrâzhdum.*

(6) *Asnatar* : *Haurrafsharô.....* (7) *Atarerakhsha* : *Haurvdm...*
Ameretdtâo. *avâchi.*

(4) *Rathvishkara* : *Thrâzhdum ...* (5) *Fraberetar* : *Pairi.....dade-*
thrâzhdum. *mahâ.*

(2) *Aberetar* : *Haithyô.....cha-* (1) *Hâvanân* : *Hé ptâ.....stóish.*
rekeremahâ.

Similarly in the Visperad ceremony, the text *vanghu...hvarshîo* in Yasna LIX is recited by the *âtarevakhsha* from the place assigned to the *fraberetar* by whom the text is to be recited. In the same *Hâ* the *âtarevakhsha* recites from the *hâvanân*'s place to the right of the *zaotar*, the text *yênghe...vantâ*. Again, thereafter, the *âtarevakhsha* recites from the place of the *fraberetar* the text *yênghe...yazamaide* as a substitute for the absent official. In the same *Hâ* for the *sraoshâvareza* the *âtarevakhsha* recites an *Ashem Vohu* from the position assigned to the former, a text which the *sraoshâvareza* ought to recite. We find in the Avesta many other passages of this kind, where the different Mobads have to recite certain texts severally from their own individual posts, but which texts are in modern ceremonies all recited for them by the *âtarevakhsha* who changes his seat during the recital of the several texts.

RANK OF MOBADS ACCORDING TO QUALIFICATIONS.

The *zaotar* and his associate, the *âtarevakhsha* are often found speaking of their functions in ceremonies. A certain portion of the sublime text of the *ahunavar* is used for this purpose. The first of the three parts of the *ahunavar* is considered the seed of all texts for recital, and numerous texts sing of the excellences of this first part. Undoubtedly this part has an excellence which deserves all weight and consideration. At every moment we find the *zaotar* and the *âtarevakhsha* speaking of their respective functions and singing the excellence of this text. It is as follows :—

1. *Yathâ ahu vairyô saotâ frâ mē mrûtê.*
2. *Yathâ ahu vairyô yô saotâ frâ mē mrûtê.*
3. *Athâ ratush ashâtchit hacha frâ ashava vîdhvâo mraotâ.*

Of these three sentences, the first speaks of the appointment of the head officiating priest, and invariably, the *zaotar* alone recites it. The second sentence which contains the relative pronoun is recited to speak of some particular official and of his functions. The pronoun is not used to point out with any gestures the official referred to, but it is used with the title of the official. We have an example of such titular designations, thus described in the Avesta. They are: *yô saotâ*; *yô âtarevakhshô*, *yô fraberetô* and *yô sraoshâ-varəzô*. Thus we find what particular functionary is intended to be spoken of. The second sentence above cited is recited both by the *zaotar* and the *âtarevakhsha* but when it is recited by the latter, he does it in speaking of the *zaotar* and his functions, and when recited by the *zaotar* it is done to designate other officials and their functions. The third sentence with the *athâ ratush* is recited to denote the acceptance of their particular functions by the different officials. We shall try to understand the meaning of these sentences by examining them separately.

The *zaotar* first tells the *âtarevakhsha* to appoint a head of the ceremonial in these words: “*Yathâ ahu vairyô saotâ frâ mē mrûtê*”, i. e., “Let me be declared the *zaotar* (for the recital of) the *Yathâ ahu vairyô*”. Upon this, the *âtarevakhsha*, pronouncing not his own, but the *zaotar*’s high dignity says: “*Yathâ ahu vairyô yô saotâ frâ mē mrûtê*”, i. e., “Let him who is the *zaotar* declare the *Yathâ ahu vairyô* to me. Now the *zaotar* taking charge of his post says: “*Athâ ratush ashâtchit hacha frâ ashava vîdhvâo mraotâ*”, i. e., “The pious learned *zaotar* declares *athâ ratush ashâtchit hacha*.

We find in the third chapter of the *Visperad* a passage where the *âtarevakhsha* takes the name of the *zaotar* and directly declares his authority, and in reply to this, the *zaotar* accepts the post with the titles. The only difference is this, that there, instead of the *ahunavar*, the text referred to is that of the *staota yasna*, which is the name given to the collective group of the *yathâ*, *ashem* and *yêngheh hâtum* texts. The *âtarevakhsha* says: "tum nô âthraom zaotasti", i. e., "O priest, thou art our *zaotar*." The *zaotar* says: "Asem acta staota visîti staotanîm frasraothremcha, framarethremcha, jragâthremcha frîyêshtrimcha", i. e., "As a *zaotar* I accept the hearing, remembrance, recital and offering of the *Staota Yasna*."

EVIDENCE AS TO THE POSITION OF MOBADS FROM THE RITUAL.

The ceremony of preparing and straining the haoma juice gives us a real idea about the appointment of a head officiating priest for the *Yasna* and other important ceremonies. In that ceremonial, when the officiating priest, having completed the ceremony, is sitting on the *zöt-gâh*, another *Mobad* enters the *Yajishna-gâh*, and declaring his candidature for the post of *zaotar*, says: "Yathâ ahu vairyô zaotâ frâ mē mrûtê", and immediately rising from the *zöt-gâh*, the other official makes room for him. Now the *zaotar* who is installed in his place recites the text "Athâ ratush ashâtchit hacha frâ ashavâ vidhvâo mraotû" and with the word *shyaothnanam* of the second of the two *ahunavars* he recites thereafter, he takes his seat and proceeds with the ceremony as head priest. Here we see the *zaotar* recognised as head for denoting the excellence of the ritual. The *âtarevakhsha*, too, has some position and dignity, and so the *zaotar* says: "Yathâ ahu vairyô âtarevakhshô frâ mē mrûtê", i.e., "Let the *âtarevakhsha* declare the *yathâ ahu vairyô* to me." The *âtarevakhsha* accepting this task, says: "Athâ ratush ashâtchit hacha frâ ashavâ vidhvâo mraotû."

These two examples illustrate the position of the *zaotar* and the *âtarevakhsha*. Here when the *zaotar* asks the *âtarevakhsha* to describe the excellence of any particular ritual, the latter does it immediately, as he is present, there and then; and so likewise does the *zaotar* at the request of the *âtarevakhsha*. The principle is well observed with reference to these two functionaries, because they are both present in person. But it is not so observed in other cases. In the same way as the *zaotar* asks the *âtarevakhsha* to carry out his functions, he calls on the other officials of the ceremony to do theirs. These are the *fraberetur* and the *sraoshâvareza*. In their absence it is the *âtarevakhsha* who, in modern ceremonials, does their task. This is to be seen in the Visperad, in the recital of Yasna LXV; where the call to the *fraberetur* and the *sraoshâvareza* is answered by the *âtarevakhsha*.

We shall close our theme here. We notice from what we have seen in this essay, the antiquity of our ritual, and also the changes and improvements made therein with the change of time, place and circumstances. These changes and improvements are due mostly to the Sâssanian regime. The Zoroastrian religion has passed through many ups and downs since its first promulgation. It has seen many changes of Empires. A few improvements have been made in the ceremonies during the ascendancy of the Empire, and with the downfall of the Empire it has suffered from many evil influences.

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